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BEATRICE.



A NOVEL.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

BEATRICE;

OR,

THE WYCHERLY FAMILY.

A Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MARY WHITE.



'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;
It pays our hopes with something still that's new;
Each day's a mistress unenjoyed before;
Like travellers, we're pleased with seeing more.
DRYDEN'S *Aurengzebe*.

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BEATRICE.

CHAPTER I.

ON mature and deliberate scrutiny, Mr. Faulkner thought the refusal in Beatrice's letter not so *very* steady; there was even an incoherence in it, from which he was disposed to judge that some hidden and mysterious motive, entirely independent of a want of affection, prompted her to give a negative to his request. He was too clear-sighted not to perceive that his addresses to any one member of the Wycherly family would meet with no disapprobation from the *parents*; in fact, he had been rather sought for by them; but,

to the commonplace truism, "of esteeming him as a friend, and nothing more." She seemed hurried in her feelings—and wretched in her mind, determined to refuse him; yet it seemed at considerable expence to her mind and feelings, and he was far from being satisfied at the epistle; and, in all probability, had Beatrice taken more time in the formation of it, and read it calmly over to herself, dwelling with especial care on the contents, in all human possibility she would never have sent it. She had only time to run it hastily through, for the servant was waiting for the post-bag: only *once* through, we say, and that was not enough in a momentous case of answering a lover's epistle.

Mr. Faulkner then wished for a personal interview; and to further his wishes in that respect, he wrote to request it as early as possible—for all delay then, was to him more than usually irksome: he saw the value of the prize; and as far as an honourable man could go to obtain it, he was resolved to proceed. He was denied this.

Beatrice hoped he would think no more of her, and was sorry her letter had not been sufficiently decisive: there was one question in his she had no hesitation whatever in answering; it related to her having some other lover. She had none, on the honour and word of a lady. Where then existed the motive of denial? He could not comprehend; and very much perplexed in his mind, he accompanied his sister and aunt to town for the winter—for he cared not how soon he left a place, which, divested of its chief charm, could only appear to him both cheerless and melancholy.

In consequence of Anne Wycherly's ill health, a removal to L——, was deemed necessary, not so much for sea air, as change of situation and place to a mind diseased by a remorse and regret for the past. Nervous depression followed a fit of sickness; and in consequence of that morbid impression, which threatened to destroy her very existence by incessant grief, Mrs. Wycherly and her two daugh-

ters, Beatrice and Anne, by easy stages, and in a carriage adapted for travelling, set off for L——. They arrived there late in the evening: and with some pleasure, after a wet day's fatigue (or rather the dulness and uncomfortable dreariness attendant on a journey made in the rain), they found themselves at the lodgings which had been taken for them. Anne was then very ill; the dashing, coquetting, trifling girl was subdued into the pale, melancholy, brokenhearted woman; and the spirits for which she had been so often remarked and extolled, seemed fled, never to return. She was no longer ambitious of shewing off her fine figure—of being esteemed the “gayest of the gay;” and added to the idea of her own misery of mind, was the reflection that she had increased that of Stamford. He had been in scenes of vice—was there still—far from his parent and his home; he was ruining his peace of mind still more than ever, by a mode of conduct which threatened destruction to his health—his temporal as

well as his eternal happiness. The voice of a widowed mother had failed to recall him; and Anne shivered, in her moments of reflection, to think what she had done: that he was weak, she saw; but would his weakness have degenerated into vice, had she been honourable in all her dealings towards him? And as each day seemed to bring her nearer to her death, in her own point of vision, her detestation of her crime seemed to increase; could she but hear he was reformed, or even in the way of virtue, she could die in peace; and this was constantly expressed by her in her prayers and religious thoughts: self-disgust had augmented the nervous state of irritation in which she was, and with this feeling had arisen a sentiment of agonizing repentance, far beyond our art to describe; it partook of so many griefs, and so many pains, that it brought her to a dejection, which preyed evidently on her frame. In the solid mind and calm temper of Beatrice, she found far more comfort than in the romantic consolations of Susan, whose

understanding, not subjugated to education or contemplation, had neglected to be raised on so firm a basis as her younger sister's. The susceptibility of Susan's temper—the precipitation of her goodness, were sometimes beyond the power of control or correction: she had what the world, and her cousin William, called amiable failings; but it is not of these we are about to speak.

It was on the third day after their arrival at L——, Anne, drawn in a small chaise by a favourite pony, proceeded (driven by Beatrice) to the sea-side. The sun was then setting, and a grander spectacle could not well be imagined, than the last farewell of that glorious luminary, dying over the face of the waters. The breakers, sometimes dashing against the cliffs, and sometimes raising their snowy heads, enveloped in foam, yards high, attracted the attention of Anne, as well as the admiration and awe of her sister.—“Hark!” said Beatrice—“surely I hear thunder at a distance; we had better return;” and address-

ing herself to a seaman on the beach, she asked whether he did not anticipate a storm?

"May be there will," he replied, carelessly looking on the sea; "there seems a shew for it; and there was a dead calm a short time since. You had better, ladies, steer home, for it is coming on."

"I am not afraid of lightning or thunder, and I wish to stay," said Anne.

"But you must not get wet," advanced Beatrice, gently.

"It will do me no harm; and if you will not stay with me, Beatrice, I will stay alone," said Anne, half pettishly; "the sea looks so beautiful; and if the tempest be very dreadful, we can soon get home, for it is not near us yet."

Beatrice would have ventured to have reasoned with Anne, but she was then too ill to reason; and the irritation of nervous depression, unless humoured, threatened to make the sufferer considerably worse.

"There is a clap of thunder at a great

distance," said Anne; "we can go round by St. James's Cliff, and reach home in time."

"Do let us stay to hear some of those sweet tunes," exclaimed Beatrice; "there is a boy, with a hand organ, playing to some ladies."

Anne turned her head, and saw the boy of whom Beatrice spoke, standing before a party of belles, who were endeavouring to form a quadrille on the sands.

"How sweetly he plays!" said Beatrice; "I am delighted at hearing him."

"Yes; but does not the sea and the cliffs make the organ appear more musical?" said Anne. "All those tunes I remember so well; 'The Castilian Maid' Stamford has danced with me. Come, let us go on—I cannot bear to hear them now."

Beatrice drove a few steps forward before she remembered that they had brought out Anne's dog, Blucher, with them, and that he was missing; she therefore stopped

to call him, as she imagined he was just at the base of one of the cliffs.

"Pray drive on," said Anne, in all the nervous anger of the moment; "I shall go mad if that organ boy comes up."

"But we must not leave the dog," said Beatrice; and she continued to call him by his name until he appeared, despite Anne's hasty remonstrances.

The organ boy was then at the back of the chaise; for the ladies, fearful of the tempest, and unable to dance where the sand was so wet, had dispatched him, with a slight remuneration; and he made up to the two Wycherlys, under the impression that they waited to hear him play. He was not so poor or so ragged as wandering minstrels usually are; and though his countenance was neither prepossessing nor beautiful, Beatrice felt inclined to speak to him, and ask him a few questions, for she perceived his accent was that of a foreigner.

"Let him talk as much as he likes, but don't let him play," said Anne; and Bea-

trice, whilst her sister was looking on the sea, and watching the heavy clouds as they rolled up and formed into one dark mass over their heads, asked him a few simple questions, such as—"What is your native country? How came you here? What is your name?" &c. &c.

France was his country—he came over with his father, who died soon after his arrival—his name was Francis Bongée, &c.

"And that is a sweet organ," said Beatrice; "it seems nearly new. You cannot have had it long?"

No, the boy had not; it was given him; and if the lady pleased to hear it, he was sure she would like it better than at a distance.

Anne entreated *not* to hear it on any account; and Beatrice, with some curiosity, said—"Given you! Who was so generous?"

A gentleman in London, who lived in a grand house in some square; but what square he did not know.

A vague idea started into Beatrice's

heart, that it might be Mr. Faulkner, for it was like one of his actions; and she pressed the boy to guess at the name of his benefactor, for she much wished to know who it was.

The boy could not remember, for he was not accustomed much to English names. He could write a little; and hearing his benefactor's name mentioned, he had scrawled it on a piece of paper, but he was afraid he had lost it, he said.

"Was he tall?" asked Beatrice, smiling.

"Yes; and pale too," said the boy.

"What—*very* pale?"

"Yes—and thin. My organ was broken—for there are a great many people in London who like to tease the French: he came up, and asked me what I was crying for? He was with a great many more gentlemen, who were not sober."

"Indeed!" said Beatrice, changing colour, for she deemed *then* it could not be Mr. Faulkner, and she felt something like disappointment at the certainty. "Pray was he *dark*?" said she again.

“Yes, and spoke kind. It was a long time since I had heard so many kind words. ‘My lad,’ said the gentleman——But here, mademoiselle, is the name now.”

On a small, dirty piece of worn-out paper Beatrice deciphered the following words——
“Mister Stamfoot gave me my organ, lives in a square.”

Beatrice squeezed up the paper in her hands, that Anne might not see the name; and the boy, with some honest indignation, cried out——“Oh, that is *my* paper, mademoiselle, with Mr. Stamfoot’s name!”

“*Whose* name?” said Anne, turning her countenance towards her sister’s, with a striking and curious glance, which at once revealed she was in part aware who it was of whom the boy spoke.

“Only the gentleman who gave the boy his organ,” answered Beatrice, driving on.

“And was not his name——Ah, but *you* know what name *I* mean,” exclaimed Anne, with her lips quivering. “You, Beatrice, never attempted to tell me a

falsehood, and do not try to deceive me *now*. It is Stamford—it *was* Stamford, I mean, who gave him the organ."

"Yes," replied Beatrice; "it seems so."

"Oh, then, let the boy come up. Give him some money, and let *me* talk to him," said Anne.

The boy, during the time of the conversation, had kept close behind the pony-chaise, under the impression that he had interested the ladies sufficiently to bestow on him some halfpence; nor was he mistaken; for Beatrice, at Anne's suggestion, gave him a shilling, saying—"Tell us more concerning the gentleman who gave you your organ."

"I only know, ladies, he was the best friend I ever had in my life," answered the boy, in broken English, which, for the sake of our readers, we omit.

"And so kind, you say?" said Anne, with some kind of joyful energy, mingled with an emotion of a nature not to be described.

"Yes, mademoiselle; but he seemed ill."

"Was he happy—happy-looking, I mean?" asked Anne, quickly.

"At first he was; but when I saw him the next day, he was not. I was in the kitchen of *his* house, and he came in, saying—'Oh, you are the little boy whose organ was broken. You shall go with me, and choose a new one;' and when he had bought it me, he gave me five shillings, told me to be honest, and went away. When I asked him to tell me his name—'That,' says he, 'matters not,' and he gave a deep sigh.—'Sir,' says I, 'if I should see you again——?'—'That,' said he, 'you never will.' And I heard some of the servants say, I wonder Miss—somebody, I do not know her name, should like to marry a young gentleman who is so wild, and has ran through his fortune so."

"What, then, he is going to be married!" exclaimed Anne, bleaching white; and Beatrice found herself obliged to lay

her hand on her arm, to restrain her vehemence, and repel the force of that feeling, which threatened to burst through all bounds.

"Yes; and I saw him once afterwards with some fine ladies; and I judged one was to be his wife, for she was so pretty," advanced the boy.

A jealous sentiment, which Anne could scarcely prevent, agitated her bosom; torn by conflicting passions, grief, love, despair, and regret for the past, she could only implore Beatrice to go on—to drive her from herself, if possible. There had been something soothing in the idea that he rejected all women for her sake; but this sentiment was quenched, when she heard of his intended marriage to another.

Beatrice represented, that it ought not to create pain in her, but rather rejoicing. "You see, my dear sister," she said, kindly, when the organ boy was out of sight, "that he has not lost all his sense of better feeling; and who knows but his temporary estrangement from virtue, may

not make him, with the greater zest, apply to that which is good? A storm is oftentimes followed by a calm: and indeed, if you would reflect for a moment, you will see that his marriage will prove beneficial to you. You seem surprised; but when you *consider*, you will cease to be so. You, in the event of that taking place, will have lost all hope; and love must expire, if left to one individual; this I know from experience. You indulged perhaps in the chimera, that if he were aware you really and sincerely loved him, he might forget the past; chance might throw you in each other's way—that the representations his mother gave of your conduct might influence him to return to her, and ultimately to you. His marriage, though a severe truth, must end all these delusions: there will then be but one plain path for you to pursue; and, hope being ended, time and absence would be your cure.”

Anne saw the justice of Beatrice's remark; but she could not believe she should

"never cease to love." A long and severe illness had been the consequence of their separation—it had left her reduced to the grave—fallen away in personal appearance, and completely unsettled and wretched in her mind; and at the moment when she said—"I shall never cease to love him," she thought so, and judged from the intensity of her anguish. All wish of retaining life was lost, and she was indifferent whether she died or lived; and had it been in her power to have chosen, she would rather have preferred that grave, "where the weary are at rest," than life, with all its luxuries and enjoyments.

They had reached home some minutes before the storm, which so long had threatened them, came on; and Anne, completely exhausted by her ride and the intelligence she had heard, was lying on a sofa, opposite a window which commanded a view of the sea. Her mother was at cards, and Beatrice, attentive to the wants of a sister who grew dearer to her almost every hour, was supporting her by

one arm, and with the other was holding a newspaper, which Anne had expressed a wish to hear read aloud. She inquired eagerly if Stamford's marriage was in it— if there was nothing concerning him? and to her repeated interrogations, Beatrice replied—"There is nothing about him; but one of his intimate friends is dead. Burney—lord Burney—died by a fall from his phaeton—his skull fractured—in a state of inebriety, it appears, and has left a wife to lament his loss."

"Lord Burney was a bad, depraved man," said Anne; "and he led Stamford away; not but that I caused him to be what he is, or rather, I hope, what he was."

"No more self-reproach," exclaimed Beatrice; "let us get up, and look at the storm, for I have been told this is a dangerous beach, and the water is now fearfully agitated."

"How romantic you are!" exclaimed Anne, "talking of the water being 'fearfully agitated.' Stamford always said you were so."

"If you would just look towards the sea," replied Beatrice, "you could use no other term, than it was fearfully agitated. You call me romantic," she continued, smiling, and pressing her sister's hand; "but I am only a lover of nature; and yesterday, when I was on the cliffs, I saw you smile to hear me say, how glorious the sea looked, and how much I enjoyed it! That was not romance, it was gratitude, pleasure, and delight, in contemplating the vast and stupendous works of an Almighty Hand. A romantic woman would not have used the commonplace expressions I did, of—'Oh, how charming—how grand this is!' she would have said—'How sublime this scene! How the sea rolls in beauteous waves!' Permit me to draw a distinct line between the romantic, enthusiastic lover of nature, and one who can appreciate its beauty, without making herself ridiculous."

"Hark!" exclaimed Anne, "I hear a minute gun. Now—listen again! some poor creatures at sea are in danger."

Beatrice rose from the sofa, opened the window, and leaning out, scarcely venturing to draw her breath, soon, amid the wild roaring of the ocean, heard that mournful call of distress, the minute gun of danger.—“God help them!” said she, casting her eyes on the waters.

“God help them!” exclaimed Anne, re-echoing her words, “and send them into safety!”

“Bless me!” exclaimed Mrs. Wycherly, “what a furious storm—frightened all my good play out of me! I had such a fine hand—three honours—ace, king, hearts—ace, king, clubs.”

“Oh, there is another gun!” said Anne, shuddering. “It seemed nearer than the last. Perhaps they *may* be saved.”

“Mrs. Gwynne tells me the life-boat is put out to sea; but it runs so high there is but little chance,” said Mrs. Wycherly. “You must not let this make you nervous. I was just going to deal, when in comes Mr. Gwynne, and he tells us the news—a vessel at sea is in great danger,

and I have been near enough, by the aid of a glass, to see the poor creatures in the shrouds; they must be wrecked, he says. But the life-boat is out, and all will be done that possibly can. But poor Mrs. Gwynne could not, for the life of her, finish the rubber, she is so nervous, you know, and so she is gone home. I held such a fine hand, and we had gained a double, they a single, and this last was to have been the conqueror. Whilst Mr. Gwynne was telling us, I dealt, and sorted my cards. There I had ace, king, queen, in diamonds—they were trumps too.”

“ There is another gun !” advanced Beatrice, stretching her sight on to the sea; “ and I can almost fancy I hear calls for help.”

“ They were trumps; and I had altogether the finest leading hand I ever had in my life,” continued Mrs. Wycherly, whom an earthquake itself could scarcely have put aside from her history.

The evening, in consequence of the storm, closed in rapidly, and total dark-

ness enveloped the whole town, except indeed where some fortunate lamp escaped the fury of the wind; but the anxiety of the inhabitants was testified by their attending on the sea-shore with lights, some actuated by the best, and some by the worst of motives, to ascertain the issue of the tempest.

It may not here be irrelevant, for a short time, to give an insight into that vessel which was destined to leave the harbour, "proud in the swelling gale," no other port ever to behold. She was bound for Denmark, and had nearly three hundred souls on board.

It was at half past eight, p. m. that danger first became visible; the wind, with sudden shift, threw the ship into the trough of the sea, shattered the stern-post and the stern-frame, and tore the rudder completely away. A keen gale came on also, and the jeopardy of the vessel was such, as to require "all hands to the pumps;" and, in consequence, one gang of men were immediately put upon them, whilst the

others, by every strenuous exertion, endeavoured to avert a destruction which appeared inevitable. Suddenly the wind fell, and hopes were entertained that the vessel might be kept afloat until day-break: the leak was considerably reduced, and only one chain pump in use; but at midnight a squall came on—a gust we cannot pretend to describe, which laid the ship on her beam-ends. She then lay motionless—the water left the hold, and washed the decks.—“Cut the masts away,” said the captain, with that melancholy sternness a man testifies when he sees inevitable destruction, “both main and mizen;” and even those efforts being useless, he ordered the fore-mast and bowsprit to be cut down, which righted the vessel; but the wind and waves had yet tremendous power over them: a heavy sea followed this desperate scene, and darkness, even more terrible than the roaring ocean itself, spread all around.

By a “lantern dimly burning,” the

captain saw some of his choicest men get into the long-boat; and he could not, as he saw it lost amid the horrid and terrific sea, refrain from that chill of the soul, when man takes leave of man, to meet no more on earth—when the last life gaze is given, and the last warm pressure of the hand is gone—“Farewell!” exclaimed the captain, looking over the bow; and he turned quickly round from the darkening mass then gliding over the waters, and the noisy splash of the oars, to comfort those who were left behind. By the same “dim” light he saw the cutter glide off, amid a heavy sea; and with a melancholy, though calm countenance, he beheld men lashing themselves to their hammocks, others equipping themselves in their best clothes, some engaged in prayer, and others in the dull, dark chaos of despair, stood awaiting the going down of the vessel: then came the melancholy office of shaking hands, not of wishing each other well, and then—

" Rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave ;
Then some leap'd overboard, with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave ;
And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell—
And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die.

" And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
Louder than the ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder—and then all was hush'd,
Save the wild wind, and the remorseless dash
Of billows ; but at intervals there gush'd,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony."

At seven o'clock, a. m., when the sun rose in grand majesty and beauty over the placid bosom of the sea, no vestige remained of the *Amphitryon*—no vestige remained of that fine vessel, which had left the harbour proudly manned, and with a gallant crew. In the dead of the night she had been upon the waters like a heavy and useless log—in the morning, when the sun arose, the sea was still, the tempest past, and the noble vessel gone!

CHAPTER II.
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—— Amid this melancholy wreck,  
Where miserly and spendthrift cares are shewn,  
We may go see—with horror-stricken eye,  
Look o'er the past, and quail at misery      AUTHOR.

IT was evident to the inhabitants of L——, that the vessel which had been lost, had been bound for some distant port, and that she had not been at sea many days, as fruits, quite fresh, were thrown on shore; dead fowls, booms, hen-coops, and spars, the keys of a pianoforte, and other things of small importance, were washed on the beach; and with eager curiosity, it may be supposed, every thing which related to so distressing an event were minutely inspected. The beauty of the morning after the tempestuous night brought many ladies to the sands, and even they were not

deficient in curiosity respecting the different articles which the waves brought.

“I wish,” exclaimed a fine lovely creature, appealing to her sister, both by voice and look, “that I could do as lady — did—find a miniature, fall in love with it, and afterwards meet the original, and then marry him : it would be something *outré*.”

“It would be something strange if you made a reasonable wish, Emily! Look here—here are the ivory keys of a piano,” answered her sister.

“Then there were ladies on board,” said Emily, assuming an air of concern. “I wonder whether the bodies will be washed on shore : how shocking it will be if there are many drowned! I heard it was supposed the boats swamped almost in sight of land, and no one could render them any assistance.”

“Bless me!” exclaimed Miss Juliet Amherste, who had yet to learn feeling, “this shipwreck has terrified you all. Jessop has just told me, the body of an Adonis is come on shore ; he describes the person

to be so handsome, I expire to see him : the body is in the west boat-house. Let us go and see it : he is a man of distinction, by his clothes, I hear. Come."

Oh, the ladies would not go for the world ; but, upon a little entreaty, and Miss Amherste enticing them, by an exaggerated description of the person of the drowned man, they were determined to look at his clothes, and hear if it was known who he was. On arriving at the west boat-house, they were spared the degradation and pain of having to view the remains of the drowned man ; they had been removed to a house in the town, where Miss Amherste declared she dare not go, and proposed returning home to breakfast, as she saw those " horrid Miss Wycherlys" were coming that way, and she *hated* them both, and moreover wished to avoid them.—" Bless me now, they *will* see me !" she exclaimed, returning Beatrice's bow with one of cool pride. " These people really are horrid ; but one must be civil, I suppose, and speak to

them; and she will (Beatrice I mean) will have so much to say on this shipwreck, and the winds and the waves, for she writes novels: all novel-writers must be romantic."

Anne and Beatrice once arrived within talking distance, were saluted with all that a polite, insincere, frothy lady could say on the pleasurable meeting of the morning—complimented Anne on her recovering looks, and Beatrice on the delightful tale she had written—protested she heard it was generally admired, and hoped it would only be a preface to more—declared she had had no time to call any where, but they certainly would be the first to whom a visit would be directed.

Lady Emily pressed forward to *see* Beatrice, for she thought there must be some genius in the countenance of one who had written; and she was unlike her cousin, Miss Amherste, who declared there was "nothing particular in it," for *she* thought there was a great deal of sense and solidity in it, tempered with a sweet-tempered

look, seemingly clouded with melancholy : she wished to hear her express herself relative to the last night's tremendous gale ; but Miss Amherste was whispering Beatrice to know if *she* had heard Stamford was going to be married, and whether it was true ?

“ Miss Coxe, from whom I had a letter this morning——” said Beatrice.

“ Miss Coxe ! oh, you are very intimate there,” interrupted Miss Amherste, quickly. “ How is Mr. Coxe ? he is another of my Adonises.”

“ Do *you* know Miss Coxe ?” exclaimed lady Emily, with something of joyful interest in her tone, and appealing to Beatrice with an expression of delightful surprise.

“ I am very intimate—I correspond—she is one of my dearest friends.”

“ Oh yes ! What, has my cousin, lady Emily Western, yet to learn that Mr. Coxe is——Nay, Miss Beatrice Wycherly,” advanced Miss Amherste, “ betray not thyself by a blush—what is he ? is he not thy lover ?”

“ My friend, my sincere friend,” she replied, with honest firmness and frankness, standing Miss Amherste’s penetrating glance; and the fine blush, which had passed over her countenance, vanished away, leaving it as pale as ever.

“ Have you heard any thing of Mr. Faulkner lately ?” said Miss Amherste, with a tone of raillery ; “ and Miss Faulkner, in her town campaign—I wonder whether it has answered or not ?”

Beatrice replied, she had not heard a syllable respecting him or his sister since Christmas — that was only in a commonplace casual way ; he was well, and she believed did not intend returning to the Lodge for the summer.

“ There may be some reason for that,” said lady Emily, with a sly look at her cousin ; for she had heard the tale of *their* being lovers, and separating under very different circumstances than what really existed.

Miss Amherste had the grace to blush

most elegantly, and almost immediately changed the conversation.

“Come,” said lady Emily, in a low voice, “I wish you, Juliet, would do me one favour; will you introduce me to Miss Wycherly? I feel awkward, and I want to talk to her.”

Miss Amherste could have no objection, and the introduction took place accordingly. Miss Amherste, however, found means to part the two, by a disquisition on her dog, and she was satisfied.

“How are your birds?” asked Beatrice, who was quite ignorant that the neglect of them had once given her companion serious uneasiness.

“Oh, they are all dead! They were so much trouble, and I grow tired of a thing after a time: they died off very conveniently, one by one, and were all gone just as I wished them to make their exit, and my aviary is now turned into a grotto again. Mine is a sad changeable mind. Heigh ho! Good morning—I must have my breakfast;” and with a



feeling which was a part of her good disposition, Beatrice saw Miss Amherste check a sigh, be for a moment melancholy, and even sad, and then return to her former heartless manner of expression.

Miss Amherste no sooner was out of sight, than lady Emily Western began to commend the fair field of promise the introduction to Beatrice had opened to her: she found they had conversed on books; and lady Emily had even said she meant to lend Beatrice one, and should send it up that evening; or, as Miss Amherste had promised to call, *they* could very well call with it.

"What should you want to call for?" asked Miss Amherste, pettishly. "Anne, you see, is fast dying; Beatrice even hinted she did not care for company; and I am sure my cousin Emily will not wish to intrude."

"Not to *intrude*, certainly," lady Emily said, with some generous dignity; "but I like her."

"Well, dear Emily, she says Anne

needs quiet—rest—and to day she is very ill. Why do you want to call? It is only curiosity to see this Beatrice, because she has written a tale, a mere commonplace thing, which no one cares to read.”

“Why, how you praised it to her!” exclaimed lady Emily, with a blush of surprise. “Why could you do so?”

“Simply because it gave her pleasure; no one can be indifferent to fame, whether it be from inventing a cap or a book. I told her it was universally read—no such thing; I told her *I* admired it—I can’t endure it; and I wish her to write again, only to quiz her, or to laugh at her.”

Lady Emily was motionless with dismay and surprise; but concealing what she felt, even from her sister, she walked on some paces in silence: it was broken by Miss Amherste, who, running her eye along the sea-shore, perceived the pony-chaise in which the Wycherlys were returning, and Mrs. Wycherly in it; Beatrice walking at a short distance.—“Oh, come, let us escape!” said she, directing

the attention of her cousins to it. "Mrs. Wycherly is a horrid card-playing woman, and we shall be bored to death with *her*."

Lady Emily was not afraid of being "bored to death," for she lingered in her pace, that Beatrice might be able to overtake them; but Beatrice, fearful and shy, slackened hers, that she might not intrude, therefore they did not again meet.

The mask had in part that morning fallen from Miss Amherste's mind; for lady Emily felt she must be deficient in principle, to speak as she had done, and mean nothing. She resolved the discovery should not be useless; for she was aware, that those who *can* deceive, are in few things ever to be trusted.

"Did not you think I finessed admirably?" exclaimed Miss Amherste, as, with laughing eyes, she looked into those of her cousin, and felt astonished not to find a reciprocal feeling there. "People are so deceived by appearances; but it is

necessary to be polite, even if you hate a person."

"I never heard of any 'finessing admirably," replied lady Emily, gravely; "and even if we *hate* a person, which is a terrible sentiment to express or feel, we need not be insincere."

"Oh yes, we must; you would feel a necessity of saying—'Oh, I am really delighted to see you!' when you wished them at the North Pole; or, 'I am sorry to part with you so soon,' when you are glad they are going. All this must be."

"It need not be. Neither need we *hate*; *hate* nothing but vice," answered lady Emily.

"Oh, but I must hate; I hate a bad partner at a ball—a quadrille played quick; I hate red hair, and freckled hands; I hate a pony, like that of the Wycherlys; and I hate the bore of people who are dull and stupid, yet fancy themselves witty and quite the thing."

"You shall hear what I hate," said lady Emily—"a coquette—a deceiver—a tri-

fler—a person of faulty principle and insincere disposition ; and I heartily condemn all manœuvres, finessing, and subterfuge.”

“ Those are a string of rational *hates* : I lived in a different world, where I was not taught to despise all these things ; they were cherished in me ; and, you know, what is planted in youth must grow. You and I are different as a rose from a lily ; or rather, you shall be a violet—

‘ Hiding its gentle head  
Beneath its leaves of grassy green ;

and I—

‘ The tall tulip, gaudy blowing,  
Hues of different colours shewing.”

“ Just as you please,” said lady Emily, carelessly ; “ don’t make me a deceiver, and I do not mind.—Here comes Alfred to meet us.”

She walked forward to speak to her brother ; and as she drew him apart from her cousin and sister, the former looked after them with an eye of concern, yet not suspicion ; but this uneasiness did not

last long, for in five minutes Alfred and Emily were at her side.

Lady Emily, in the short five minutes passed with her brother, had only time to say—"Alfred, think nothing more of Juliet Amherste, our cousin—she is not worthy of you; deceive neither her nor yourself, by an attachment which *you* can eradicate in its birth; I would have *her* spared pain, as well as yourself. In one word—one single sentence—she is a woman of no principle."

Alfred's countenance changed; but he was too firmly convinced of lady Emily's justice and deliberation, to argue the point a moment—he could only say what he looked—that he was grieved and distressed.

"So am I," she continued, with gentle and feeling persuasion; "but better you should know now what she is, than awake to a sense of her real disposition later. It occurred to me yesterday, when she was so capricious concerning the grapes at dinner,

she was only playing a part, and to-day I know it."

"Then you have saved me again," said Alfred, a kind of generous gratitude appearing both in his voice and manner. "Thank you; and believe me capable of appreciating all you have done. Juliet is handsome and attractive; but I am cured of all my *penchant*, by hearing she is insincere, and does not possess those solid qualities of the mind and heart I must look for in the selection of a wife; and, in fact, they are the only true foundations of happiness:" he therefore joined Miss Amherste and his sister—entered into conversation with them, as usual, on common every-day topics, but carefully avoided the *fascinations* of the harp or the voice—could even be courted with more than sedulous attention—could walk, ride, converse, and trifle with the beautiful syren, and yet not love. He even withstood all these, under the impression "she was not a principled woman—she was a woman of

the world—and he had seen enough of them.”

From Beatrice lady Emily had won the most favourable account of Miss Amherste's engagement with Mr. Faulkner; for Beatrice had let many circumstances rest, which might have condemned lady Emily's relation most severely—had named others of less afflictive and dishonourable import, which served to elucidate the affair; and Alfred rejoiced again in his escape.

Of such immense importance is it that a woman should reflect well before she acts, and that, in all cases, her reason, her sense of right, and the criterion which her own heart gives, should set the path for her to pursue; if she rejects these, as beneath her consideration, in some future hour, may she not have poignantly to regret the irremediable and fatal omission, without even the solitary chance of repairing the injury she has done herself, even by the greatest and severest pangs of repentance at the days gone by?



In the evening, Anne being more than usually depressed in spirits, and more indisposed and relaxed than she had yet been, felt herself unable to enjoy a ride on the sea-shore; and after hearing Beatrice read to her for some time, she was surprised by a quick, light step on the stairs, and still more so by the appearance of Miss Amherste, elegantly dressed in the height of the fashion, and in all the effervescence of high spirits; she stood before her—the countenances of each underwent a severe change—she endured a momentary shock, in seeing the shadow of Anne Wycherly, for she could scarcely imagine it *was* she lying on a sofa, so thin—in the last stage of a decaying consumption—wan and pale; the triumphant blaze of intellectual brightness no longer existed in her features, nor the arch elevation of a fine commanding, tho' not handsome brow, which bespoke the gaiety of a heart at peace. In the morning she had beheld her in a close bonnet, which had hidden, in part, the ravages grief had

made in her countenance, and a pelisse had in some measure deceived her, with respect to her figure; and she felt for a moment abashed that she entered the room with a smile, and so much heartlessness as she had. She expressed her fears, that Anne was not so well, from the fatigue of the morning—that the tremendous gale in the night had disturbed her—and feared she could not have the pleasure of Beatrice's company to a friend's house, whither she was going, in consequence of the illness of one of the branches of the family.

“Oh yes; Beatrice *should* go,” Anne said; and Beatrice opposed it, under the idea that her sister was too ill to be left. Anne adhered to her first declaration—she would rather Beatrice would go, as she wished to sleep, and her mother would sit by her.

Beatrice consequently put on her bonnet, and Miss Amherste, drawing her arm within hers, led her to the door, saying—“Ah, my dear Anne, you must make

haste and recover. Do as I do; keep your spirits up, and get well. As to coquetting a little, why it *is* to be forgiven; and you never were so bad as I was—so *adieu, au revoir*, and let me hear you are as good as I am.”

“Stay one moment!” exclaimed Anne, raising herself from the sofa with sudden and powerful energy; and the laughing, elegant Miss Amherste, struck by her manner and words, hesitated by the door. “Never, if you have the least regard for your own happiness, or that of your family—*or if you have the least wish to be at peace in your dying moments, suffer yourself to coquet*. If you are tempted to trifle—tempted to triumph in the affections of a being you love, and wring a heart which you see and know is all your own—if, my dear Miss Amherste, you hesitate which way to pursue, *think on ME!*”

Miss Amherste shrunk from the keen, yet feeling eyes which at that moment encountered hers; she shrunk from the contemplation of a scene so dissonant to her

feelings, and darted down the stairs, followed by Beatrice.—“Your sister thinks too seriously on these things,” she said, after she was once more at liberty to speak, and she found the house-door was closed on them—“she gives way to her feelings. If any person had treated me as Stamford has treated her, I should not regret them. Besides, I hear he is now so very dissipated.”

“It is that at which she grieves,” answered Beatrice; “she considers herself as the promoter of his errors; and though it argues a weak mind, I mean his giving way to dissipation, yet we can scarcely regret such a sentiment exists in her bosom, as to grieve at an occurrence which she *did* give birth to.”

“Well, I should think no more of it,” said Miss Amherste; “if he chose to be so absurd, he might. Talking of that, this afternoon’s post has brought me a letter from lady St. John; she tells me a piece of news concerning an old lover of mine; now I am quite pleased—not at all hurt,

angry, or mortified. Lady St. John is a disagreeable, finessing woman; she has made more matches, and marred more, than any woman in the three united kingdoms: she has two daughters, one pretty, one plain; now the plainest is by far the most pleasing. Mr. Faulkner—yes, you may well blush—is very ‘attentive,’ as lady St. John says, ‘in that quarter;’ she hints, he even ‘dreams of matrimony.’ Now really I always thought Lucy would suit him exactly, so I shall spread the report they are going to be married, for I firmly believe it will be so.”

A sickness, even unto death, or fainting, which is its counterpart, darted all over the frame of Beatrice, and she tried to subdue the shuddering feeling, as one unworthy her—as one she must endure, and put aside as soon as felt. Other sentiments must be cherished, by one who dared not accept the proffered hand, and must, in agony, reject the proffered heart also.

“You are delightfully silent, to let me

complete my history," said Miss Amherste; "and now I must tell you a little finesse of mine. You see I am more than usually dressed—or, what is more probable, *you* did not, for you do not regard such trifles—lady Emily and all the Westerns were at tea, so I started up from the company—there were I do not know how many present, and protested I had *promised* to call on Mrs. Grande. Now I had *promised* no such thing. Lady Emily suspected me, I saw; but I schooled myself sufficiently to stand her penetrative eye, and to her question of—'Shall I accompany you?'—'No, thank you; Miss Grande is ill, and I *promised* I would go alone.' That was my reply. Now I am not going to *Mrs. Grande's at all.*"

Beatrice drew back and coloured, more for her companion than herself; and making no immediate reply, Miss Amherste continued—"I want to see the body of this gent. who was drowned. I cannot go alone, and I beg and entreat you to go with me. I do not want you to see the

body, or even enter the house, only to go with me to it. I know not why, but I am seized with such a wish—such a desire to behold it; and then I mean to astonish them, when I return, by an account of Mrs. Grande, whom I have never seen, at least not this evening.”

Beatrice strongly persuaded Miss Amherste to give up the idea of seeing any sight so repelling to feminine and gentle nature, as that of a body dashed on shore must be; she gently attempted to draw her from her purpose; but the winds and waves themselves might sooner be moved, than one whom indulgence and a false education had ruined; and Beatrice, under the influence of preserving Miss Amherste from the uncomfortableness of going alone, consented to see her to the house; not to look at the body herself, but simply to preserve her companion from any extravagance of which one so totally devoid of reason might be guilty.

“Oh, look at that horrid cow!” ex-

claimed Miss Amherste, directing Beatrice's attention to one who, tormented by her drivers, seemed inclined to level all before her, in the shape of man, woman, or child. "What will become of us?"

"We must run to the nearest shop!" exclaimed Beatrice, who, like her companion, felt no inclination to be overtaken by the furious animal; and dashing along the pavement, they both darted into the door of a bookseller.

Miss Amherste, breathless, threw herself on a chair which stood in the shop, and declared she was frightened to death.

"Pray smell of my salts," said Beatrice, gently. "I am not much alarmed now."

"Or will you smell of mine?" asked a gentleman, in whose person Miss Amherste, with some dismay, recognised her cousin Alfred.

"Yours! What brought *you* here?" she asked, after conflicting changes had appeared in her countenance and manner.

"I shall retort the question," he replied.



"You said you were going to call on Mrs. Grande—what brought *you* here?"

"We *have* been," she said, with some suspicious haste, and stealing a look at her companion.

"You *have* been! So *have* I," he replied composedly.

Miss Amherste was silent, as was her cousin; and to avert the confusion which she felt, after a long pause, she introduced Beatrice to him.

"How was Mrs. Grande when *you* left her?" asked he, carelessly.

"Rather better," she replied, unhesitatingly.

"Rather better! Did they tell you so?" he inquired.

"To be sure, Alfred," answered Miss Amherste, a little indignant at his mistrust, and more so at the calm seriousness of his manner—"else how should we know.—Beatrice, you remember," and Alfred was too penetrating not to perceive, in the averted looks of the person addressed, her

utter abhorrence of any thing like falsehood or deceit—"you remember the bulletin we heard?"

Alfred listened for the reply from Beatrice, but heard none: he examined her countenance, and could only trace in it the calm seriousness of settled truth and probity; and turning towards her, he could not refrain from saying—"Ah! what message *did* they give you?"

"None," answered Beatrice, roused into an answer, and determined to speak "the truth, and nothing but the truth," if she spoke at all.

"None—no—we *called*," anxiously and quickly exclaimed Miss Amherste, frowning at Beatrice.

"You *called*! You saw Mrs. Grande then?" he said, inquiringly; "and yet you whispered something of a bulletin being given out. But *did* you see Mrs. Grande?"

Miss Amherste *did* almost tremble at boldly venturing on a falsehood, into which she feared her cousin was endeavouring to entangle her; and hesitating a

moment, she thought it better to evade the question, by simply stating, she *knew* Mrs. Grande was better.

"Bless me!" said the bookseller, "we must not believe half we hear, ma'am—for I heard Mrs. Grande died this morning at ten o'clock."

Miss Amherste's heart beat thick and fast, and she had again recourse to the smelling-case for relief. She feared the report was true, yet dreaded to ask whether it was so; whilst Alfred, with some kindness, hoped she was not shocked at the suddenness of the intelligence.

"Oh yes—I am so nervous. And since truth must come out, I did not see Mrs. Grande," she replied, "at all; nor did I see Miss Grande."

"You did not?"

"No—I was misinformed—I misunderstood when they told me Mrs. Grande was better. Servants are heedless, and I was hurried; Miss Wycherly and myself wanted to take a long walk."

Beatrice's countenance expressed sorrow

for Miss Amherste's conduct; and as Alfred consulted it, he saw what his cousin was advancing was not true.

"In all probability they told me she was not better," she said.

"In all probability," said Alfred, whose indignation got the better of his politeness, "they told you nothing."

Miss Amherste was just then addressed by the bookseller, concerning some book she had neglected to have returned; she was so harassed and perplexed by passing incidents, she could not decidedly remember the name of the work, her attention being at once distracted by Alfred's last words, and the tone in which they were spoken.—"I really forget the title," she said, mechanically, and without turning her head to the bookseller.

"The one, ma'am, you were so long before you could have. A gentleman wants the first volume, and we let them out at considerable profit. You promised, ma'am, I should have them home two days since; it is——" and he named it.

Miss Amherste found her recollection by the quick turning of her cousin's figure, and the expressive, yet sorrowful indignant look he gave her, which brought her at once to her thoughts and senses ; it was a book he had advised her not to read, and she had *promised* him she would not ; but he was not the first man who had been deceived by the promises of a fair lady.

The peril incident to the wild cow being over, Miss Amherste rose, and prepared to go: a white lie even then hovered on her lips ; and to the question of—" Are you going to return ?" she answered—" No, I must go to my milliner's."

She had no intention at the moment she spoke of so doing ; but passing by the door, and finding Beatrice *really* thought she was going in, rather than be put into one of her novels, as a character worthy only of contempt, she called, and purchased a pair of gloves, during the selecting of which she heard the gazette, that Mrs. Grande had died that very morning. Mr.

Grande was inconsolable; and, of course, none but very dear relatives or friends were admitted.

Miss Amherste had once been a *dear* friend of hers; but somehow the correspondence had been much injured by absence and time. She had indeed seen Elizabeth on the sea-shore, and had promised faithfully to call; but there had always been something in the way; she had to draw—or to practise—or the day was too warm—or too cold; so many excuses are at hand, when inclination is not on wing: but the last opportunity of seeing Elizabeth on this side the coffin-lid was past, and she felt one friend was gone, in all human possibility, without one thought of kind interest towards her.

These thoughts rushed into her mind, despite the gay streets through which Beatrice and herself passed; it is true, she now and then said—"Oh, what a singular face!" "and do look at that peculiar flounce." "I hope earnestly no one will recognise me." To avoid any recogni-

tion, Miss Amherste drew her veil down, and hurried rapidly along, not stopping until she had gained the house where the body lay.

"Now look round and see if any one is watching us," said Miss Amherste; and on Beatrice's declaring she saw no one who appeared so to do, Miss Amherste left her to proceed on alone; but suddenly turning back, she exclaimed—"Oh, I dare not venture among that crowd! Only think what my curiosity impels me to do—and if you have any mercy, see me up to the door."

Beatrice good-naturedly saw her up to the door—saw her push her way through a crowd of men that were regaling themselves with beer and refreshments in the porch of the house, and then totally disappear. She walked on slowly to wait Miss Amherste's return, and as she did so, her thoughts naturally turned on that beautiful and misguided headstrong girl. The only man she ever loved, had been unworthy even of her regard—had for-

saken and neglected her; and though too spirited to admit to the world her keen sense of mortification and disappointment, in secret she *had* mourned, in secret *had* pined; for love, ambition, and pride, by his rejection of a heart he pretended to have won, were severely and cruelly crushed. At a distance, though twilight was fast coming on, Beatrice perceived her new-made acquaintance, lord Alfred: she would have wished him not to have recognised her; but perceiving he immediately made for the spot where she was, she continued to walk on as before, preserving an evenness of pace, which might lead him to believe she neither avoided nor wished for his society.—“Where is my cousin?” she thought, would be his first question; and she was surprised to find he even passed her, without taking any notice of her, except by a slight bow. She was unladylike enough to turn round after he had been past her for a minute; and he, observing she was standing still, returned (for he also was stealing a glance),



and spoke—"Miss Wycherly, I think—this is a late hour; but perhaps you are afraid," he said, returning; "if so, permit me to see you home."

"Oh no, I am not *very* much afraid; and a friend will join me presently," she replied; "she will not be long."

"It is a lady then; my cousin perhaps?" he added, with an air of chagrin. "Where can she be gone—where Miss Wycherly could refuse her her society?"

Beatrice did not answer.

"Not surely to *that* house," pointing to the one where Miss Amherste really was; "womanish curiosity could not delight in seeing what is to be seen there."

He still received no answer, which firmly impressed him in the belief that his conclusions were just; and, with a serious air, he observed he *must* go and implore her to quit a scene from which most women would fly, rather than seek: he therefore left Beatrice near the porch, and entered the door: amid the fumes of tobacco and smoke—in a small public-house—he

sought his cousin ; and just as he reached the door of the room in which he was told the young lady was looking at the corpse, it burst open ; and amid the cries for water, and help, for " the young lady was overcome with the sight," amid, we say, her agonized and hysterical screams, he darted past the young female who was chafing her temples, to the bed on which the corpse rested, for he judged some of her deep emotion was connected with the form upon it. His feeling nature revolted at the sight, and he chilled as he beheld the being laying there. Those we have known in life, strike us with an indefinable sensation, when we behold them no more conscious of any earthly change. The sight of a corpse, to one like Miss Amherste (and a corpse which had been so bruised and mangled by the sand and waves), might be supposed to excite a sentiment of chilling horror in her bosom : she struggled to free herself from the hands of those who would have assisted her to proceed once more to the bed ; and

as she did so, lord Alfred ceased to wonder at her feelings; and, by gentle degrees, he removed her from the room—he bore her from the scene of mental suffering as speedily as possible. No wonder he was so kind and so gentle, so mild and so persuasive, for in the dimmed features of the drowned man, he had discovered the once gay, rich, and miserable LORD HAVERILL!

## CHAPTER III.

In thy changed features can I trace  
The remnants of thy gentle grace;  
Or in thy heart, oh! can I find  
That depth of thought, that purer mind,  
Which once I loved? Ah! no, I fear  
(And I must mourn with many a tear)  
The loss of that which vice estrang'd,  
And grieve a lover deeply chang'd.      AUTHOR.

Miss Amherste left L—— for her mother's immediately; and lady Emily secretly hoped, in the severe shock she had experienced, and in the illness which quickly followed that surprise, sentiments and groundwork for a thorough reformation would take place: the mind might, by an occurrence so afflictive and startling, be roused to thought, and reflection would, in all probability, follow: there was indeed much to contend against—the force of a bad and faulty education—the boiling

of an uncontradicted and violent spirit, all combated against better reason and better feeling; but there were those to whom a sense of right had come in a whirlwind and tempest, a storm, or the calm solitude of retirement. If she could once see such deep repentance as had been testified by the dying Anne Wycherly—if she could once convince her coquetry was a crime, and get her to dwell on it with severe scrutiny, analyzing the ultimate issue of its effects, and abandon a certain laxity of principle which *mademoiselle* had represented as being impossible to live in the *grande* world without, she should have hopes of seeing her beautiful cousin a useful and brilliant member of society.

\* \* \* \* \*

“It appears to me very odd,” said Anne, one evening, to Beatrice, as she was sitting by the sofa-side, “that Miss Taylor should play upon the pianoforte so much, when she knows I am so ill; it could not be impertinent to ask her to stop. Ah! there

she is singing! and the words of that air distract me."

It was "Love's young Dream;" and Beatrice rising, closed the door, without going to request Miss Taylor to cease, saying she hoped the music could not be heard so plainly then, and seating herself, pursued her work.

"You won't go and ask her then not to play?" said Anne, in an appealing tone of voice; "you think it rude: I am so ill, you know, dear Beatrice, I don't think of these things, and I *will* bear the music; only I get weak and foolish. People in lodgings should bear inconveniences, I know."

Still Beatrice withstood Anne's entreaties, and the calls of her own affectionate heart; she continued to work, though the tears chased each other down her cheeks; and on her not replying, Anne observed her agitation, and with a low voice said—"I am so ill! Do let the pianoforte be stopped; Miss Taylor will forgive it."

"Yes—but——" and a change of coun-

tenance in Beatrice, marked with considerable embarrassment, and ceasing suddenly to speak, caused Anne again to inquire whether she was not well?

"Oh yes," replied she, "quite well."

"You grieve for me?" inquired the sufferer.

Beatrice did not either confirm or negative this idea; and Anne, naturally concluding that was the case, pressed her hand, and said, she could only regret so many years of their lives had been passed separate from each other. Now she appreciated Beatrice's kind, generous, affectionate nature, she too well judged they must part; but they would one day meet again; and she hoped her mother would only love her *half* as much as *she* did, and she should die happy. There was indeed, she confessed, a shyness, a reserve, for which she could not account—a sadness and a gloom, to which she felt a delicacy existed as to her inquiring. Beatrice had had different pleasures (and perhaps they had been simpler ones) to herself and Susan; she

had been left to find amusement for herself, and had created a world of her own, in which she found troubles, vexations, and yet some happiness. All this Anne saw and knew; when in grief, the heart of Beatrice, which Anne had thought a cold phlegmatic one, melted—it could bear indifference, and the neglect of parents, who were careless to their child, but it could *not* bear to see a sister miserable and unhappy; she left her books, to amuse the distracted mind; and she proved she could feel as well as others, nay more: she had sufferings of her own—no one sought to alleviate them; no one inquired why *she* was so pale, so wan, or so thin; it was study—it was reading—it was books; people, *learned* people, were generally *very* pale; and what in fact was the effect of a diseased mind, was considered “as nothing particular,” “nothing of any peculiar moment.” “Beatrice must take more exercise, and all will be well again.”

Anne saw, with suspicious eyes, a change had taken place in Beatrice's looks; she



attributed it at first to severe study; but after some weeks residence at L——, the same morbid impression of spirit remained, and the same visible paleness of ill health; she then thought her anxiety for her, her constant and close attendance, and the confinement attendant on an invalid, had occasioned a deeper melancholy and gloom to prevail. To prevent *her* bad spirits from being infectious, she had summoned all her fortitude to her aid; she had even professed herself better, and endeavoured to lighten the blow which she saw must fall, for she thought the dissolution of nature was at hand.

For two days the pianoforte of Miss Taylor continued to be played; lively airs—songs, none of them in *sotto voce*—waltzes—bravuras—all in rotation; and incessantly did Miss Taylor continue to play, until Anne expressed it as her determination to write to her, and request her not; but during the absence of Beatrice, as the partition between Miss Taylor and her room was very thin, she

summoned strength to beat about the bush, and say, in a voice not very loud, one morning, in the midst of a song—  
“Miss Taylor, you have played a great deal; are you not tired?”

The song ceased. Miss Taylor listened; and on Anne's repeating her remark, she replied, through the partition—“Tired! oh no, I practise a great deal. Beatrice tells me she likes to hear me; so I always practise when I think she is in that room.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes; I am afraid it disturbs you; but when I asked your sister, I forget what she said,” advanced Miss Taylor; “I don't think though she made me any reply.”

Anne had nothing more to say, and the pianoforte went on. A few days afterwards Anne ceased to mind the distraction of the instrument, as people, by being accustomed to an evil, forget nearly that it exists, and in time wonder they ever thought it one.

Anne soon found the sea-air too cold, and the pony-chaise too rough to ride in; but she would have Beatrice walk, and with affectionate earnestness entreated her to preserve *her* health, and be a comfort to her mother when she was gone; she would watch her from the window, to be sure she did leave the house, and then be satisfied to think Beatrice would look a little better when she returned home; she would have a colour, and would describe all she had seen, with an assumed cheerfulness, and yet in a way which Anne could not but feel interested in, though she saw it *was* forced.

In one of these walks, which Beatrice finished as soon as possible, as she was returning from the sea-shore, she came immediately past the door of the reading-room; she remembered she had to call for a volume which contained some biographical sketch which she wished to finish, and turning to go up the steps, she paused to let a gentleman pass.

"Madam, your veil is unfastened," he

said, and bowing, he raised it from her shoulder, and gave it into her hands.

Raising her eyes, as was natural, when thanking him, she perceived it was the lover of her sister; but so changed in personal appearance, that had it not been for his voice, which revived in her heart a recollection of something which she scarcely could define, she would not, in the emaciated being before her, have recognised the once-graceful and handsome Stamford. Both coloured intensely; and Beatrice, as she received his stiff departing bow, and heard no inquiry made as to the health of their family, against whom, at least, he ought to have no animosity, though one member of it had incurred his heavy displeasure, felt a sentiment of womanly pride when she gave him one of equal height and quality; and yet, when he was gone, she could not help a feeling of pity from predominating in her bosom: he had been trifled with on one of the tenderest of human passions; he had proved himself weak—yet who had been the cause of all

his suffering, but an individual closely connected with her? Perhaps he was ignorant how far she had repented of her conduct towards him—ignorant she was then in a lingering illness, reflecting on that which had been the keystone of his and her own misery. But Beatrice, when she argued thus, was not aware a letter from his mother had fully informed him of Anne's illness of mind and body. To take from it one simple passage will sufficiently evince, that he who could reject such evidence of repentance, and harden his heart against it, could not be won to feeling or virtue by a mother's tears.

“ My dear son,” she said, “ you know how willing I am to overlook the past; and those days which are gone by can never be remembered by one who ardently prays for your return: abandon not a mother whose life is in your power; and for the sake of your father, who lives not to behold this miserable hour, return. I see lord Burney is no more: let his untimely death be a warning to you; and

do not keep away from a parent who is praying for your arrival. I have addressed this where I know you must receive it. I have enclosed some bills, which I trust you will use in travelling expences down to L——, where I am; and my hope is, you will bless me by a sight of you once again. Anne Wycherly is here; I met her yesterday, and was grieved to see her utterly changed—she is no longer a fine lovely girl, but is dying in a consumption. I always felt indignant and angry, that she should be the means of banishing you from me; but I don't know how it was, my dear son, when I saw her, I forgave her.”

On the receipt of this letter, Charles Stamford wrote to say he *would* return; and amongst a confession of his vice and errors, there was a sentence which his mother grieved to see.—“ I,” said he, “ cannot forgive Anne Wycherly; when I consider how well she knew how much I loved her, and, as has been proved, to fatal excess, I feel disposed not to pardon her;

I will never see her again. On recollection, I think too I *will* forgive her, for she was not quite so bad as lady Amherste's jilting daughter. I do not ever wish to see Anne again, for my better feelings and reason (of which, thank God! I am not totally bereft), convince me it must not be."

This was in part what related to Anne Wycherly.; happily she and Beatrice were quite ignorant of its existence altogether. When, by chance, Anne had seen Mrs. Stamford, she had looked for no bow, but had humbled her spirit so far as to hurry away as fast as her weak health would permit. They had once met face to face in a narrow street—Mrs. Stamford had not even time to turn her head aside; and having an indifferent sight, she had used her glass at Anne, before she had time to recollect herself. Anne that morning walked firmer and looked better than she had for some weeks, for the sea air had brought a bloom to her cheeks; she had hold of

lord Alfred's arm, and at the moment Mrs. Stamford raised her glass, she was smiling at some of his remarks; but not *firting*, as Mrs. Stamford's companion said, and ended her remark, by adding—"Anne Wycherly *would* flirt, even though she was at the very door of death."

"Door of death!" said Mrs. Stamford; "I think she does not look like a dying person: I heard she was in a deep decline. I wonder whether she thinks of my poor son ever?—and whether she ever thinks too of the misery she occasions me?"

Anne thought severely; but there was no kind friend to palliate or plead for her—no one to state the suffering she endured; and instead of hearing she grew worse, report said she grew better; and that lord Alfred Westerne's attentions "*soothed* the sufferer." Poor Mrs. Wycherly too, when in *her* world (viz. the card-table), had, in confidence to Mrs. Allman, acknowledged Anne was better—that she was amused and pleased by lord Alfred's kind attentions. And Mrs. Allman had, in confi-



dence to lady G——, declared L—— was not a place Miss Anne Wycherly meant to *die* at: lord Alfred Westernne amused her with his “kind attentions.” Lady G——, in confidence to Mrs. Stamford, went up to the mark at once, and advanced, lord Alfred was going to be married to Anne Wycherly, whom every one thought dying—at least he was always there; and lady Emily too, the clever sensible lady Emily, would read to the invalid, and absolutely lead her about, whilst she was so shy to all other people.

It was before Mrs. Stamford heard this report she had written to her son, for some kind friend had directed her attention to Anne lying on a sofa in Mrs. ——’s lodgings; she then beheld her with no bloom—so wasted too, and the brilliant eyes which she had loved to praise, when her son had prized their beams, dimmed and wet with the tears of suffering; she had even (struck by a sentiment of pity) bowed; and the blush of kindling recollection which

had spread over the countenance of the invalid, told full well how much she appreciated the acknowledgment.

“Poor thing!” said the lady, on whose arm Mrs. Stamford was leaning, “how ill she looks! I understand she severely repents her conduct to your son.”

Mrs. Stamford, in the first emotions of anger, said she *ought* to repent, for she was his ruin; but in a calmer hour, the look, the wasted figure, the thin hands which supported a cheek white as death, and sunk by grief, cooled her resentful manner; and she wrote to her son under the influence of those feelings, and said *she* forgave her: but when he came, he found those ideas no longer existed; he heard Miss Anne Wycherly was better: and when he called on a friend of his, who had lodgings next to those inhabited by Mrs. Wycherly and her daughters, he heard that friend say—“There is that piano off again; you never come, but open flies the piano, and those Miss Wycherlys

begin: I declare I shall hate music as long as I live."

"*Those Miss Wycherlys!*" Charles Stamford was not aware Beatrice could play; he therefore judged it was Anne, and "that she could not be so very bad, to be at the piano so much."

In reality, it was Miss Taylor; and Beatrice had privately written her a little note, to request, whenever Mr. Stamford came to visit the gentleman who had lodgings over her apartments (which apartment, it is necessary to say, extended over part of *their* sitting-room also), she would play as loud as she could, fearful of Anne's hearing Mr. Stamford's voice. This had been done, and the plan succeeded well; Anne was not so much as conscious he was in L—— at all—for all those who knew her forbore to mention his name, as one that would only create in her pain and grief; for so much may illness wear upon the mind, and reduce it to a web of mere nervous feeling, that Stamford, or any thing relative to him, was avoided as a

subject which could only be a source of unhappiness to her—and her misery must be reflected on her friends. In the most affectionate moments she passed with Beatrice, she would sometimes say—"Have you heard any thing of Stamford?" and when Beatrice gently broke to her he was returned to his mother, and in all human probability was entering on a course of life far different from that in which he had lately been involved, Anne replied only by tears—and they were tears of joy—"Do not imagine any thought but that of his future welfare," she said, "has entered my mind. I am now weaned from life, and slowly have, link by link, unfastened my heart from his. I think if he knew—if he could tell half what I have suffered, he would be inclined to forgive me."

"I hear," said Beatrice, falling on her knees by the bedside, and clasping Anne's hand in hers, "that he is *not* going to be married."

"Let him forgive me, and I can die

content," said the sufferer, calmly; "no other thought, Beatrice, enters my heart now. On the confines of death, earthly hopes fade—others, of a grander and more blissful import, appear. The visions I indulged in are gone. Come and tell me, Beatrice, whether these reflections are not better for me, than those you saw I once indulged in. I could not live to happiness, and I offer to the throne of Mercy (yes, Beatrice, *I—I* dare to pray), that the breaking heart I offer in palliation of the past, may be of some avail. This is not romance—not enthusiasm; it is simply what I feel."

"I do not regret you do feel it," exclaimed Beatrice, soothingly, "you seem to regard death so calmly, and to take leave of all so well."

"Ah!" exclaimed Anne, with her eyes filling with tears, and looking at the same moment earnestly and mournfully at her sister, "I cannot take leave of all so calm. My father, mother, brothers, sisters—my dear, dear Beatrice, *you*, draw me back to

life. I would wish to live to see you happy—happily settled with one deserving of you; but where is that one to be found? I know one individual indeed who did seem to appreciate your worth, and that was Mr. Faulkner.”

Beatrice could not withstand Anne's tender look—she could not withstand the calm, affectionate voice, which seemed to breathe more than usually sweet, the nearer it approached to dissolution. The hour too was propitious; she confessed, above all others she preferred the being Anne had named; but this confession was followed by tears so bitter, and a manner so distressed, Anne forbore to touch upon such tender ground again, and the subject dropped, leaving her under the impression that only one party loved, and that was Beatrice.

It is quite possible to feel pleasure in the society of a person, and yet not to love; we may be amused, nay, delighted and charmed, and yet not meet squire Cupid, though we hover on the confines

of his dominions. It was no more than probable that lord Alfred should feel interested in the society of a young woman, whose originality of thought, flexibility of remark, and retiring talents, were at once pleasing and attractive. He found no grace in Beatrice, no accomplishments likely to take with the world *en masse*—he found her, as one may a wild flower, by chance—and merely for want of something else to do, he went to hear how Miss Wycherly was—to carry her books or messages from his sister Emily. A frequency of visit, of course, could not fail to make the world talk; and as it was to Anne much of his politeness extended, it was to *her* he was given as an admirer; and a few days better health, during which time she was able to walk, and he kindly offered his services, favoured the idea.

One day, at the reading-rooms, two bucks, who had nothing else to do but quiz the new comers, and “could not, ’pon their souls, find any thing to suit

their tastes in the reading way," determined to quiz every one who did not wear their coats well made, and stare every modest girl out of countenance. Lord Alfred Westerne, who sat at one of the tables, with his back towards them, reading a paper, was the only gentleman in the room; but he was soon joined by Charles Stamford, who, after a five minutes reading, took up his hat, and went out again, as if unwell.—“Who is that?” said one of the bucks, as the door fell to.

“Oh! Stamford—Stanley—Stanton, or some such name. The fellow is in a decline,” said the other, “by the look of him.”

“I thought so by his coat. Who is he—*any body*?”

“Yes; ancient family, and all that; but some cursed jilt, whom he liked, was the ruin of him.”

Lord Alfred knowing the story, could not refrain from listening to the passing conversation, which insensibly distracted him from his paper.



"Who was the jilt?" asked the green-coated buck.

"Oh! I don't know; but I hear she lived somewhere within thirty miles of that elegant little coquette, Miss Amherste; so no wonder, for the little will copy the great."

A wink and a certain direction of the eye to lord Alfred made the blue-coated buck stop in the midst of his harangue; and after a minute's silence, they left the room, to discourse more at their ease, and also to hear whether the "elegant little coquette, Miss Amherste," was not own cousin to lord Alfred Westerne, before whom they had been so freely delivering their opinions; having obtained the necessary information, they wisely resolved to be more careful in future.

As but little benefit seemed to accrue from the air of L——, and as each day Anne but seemed to grow weaker, Mrs. Wycherly had determined to return home in the short space of a week. Anne also expressed a wish to go in that period, and

a letter was written, to say at that time they should arrive home, provided Anne could bear the journey. The last struggle was looked upon as not being very far distant; and it was in the village of her early youth, where so many happy hours had been passed, she wished to breathe her last.

Arrangements were consequently made for a departure home; and Beatrice thought she saw the mortal frame gradually melting into one more resembling that of an angel; the heart—the mind—the power of religious persuasion, were all in their zenith, and the spirit seemed to be strong, though the frame was weak.

Beatrice again felt glad they were going to leave L——, for, with ill-advised haste, Mrs. Stamford had taken the house next the one in which they lodged; indeed it opened into their sitting-room by folding doors, which were invariably kept locked, except when any large party made it necessary to open them for the reception of visitors. Anne had been told of this, and with more fortitude than her mother sur-

posed her capable of, she heard that she must unavoidably hear Charles's voice, as the partition was so thin, and Miss Taylor and her pianoforte were gone: she said, his voice—nay, the seeing him himself, would not affect her; and she begged that it might not be the means of hurrying her mother in her arrangements respecting her departure; she was then *prepared* for every thing, and Heaven would apportion her trials to her strength.

Mrs. Stamford, since she heard of lord Alfred's "*attentions*," had never even noticed Anne by a distant bow. With motherly love towards her son, she felt jealous that the woman whom she understood was ill, in consequence of her remorse for conduct towards him, could accept the regard of another. She felt a pleasure in saying—"Oh! Miss Anne Wycherly cannot be so *very* ill—she walked yesterday for an hour about the drawing-room with lord Alfred Westerne—she came for something besides health. All I say is—let him beware of a jilt."

Stamford never checked his mother in any of these expressions, nor did he testify any peculiar feeling when she uttered them. He was ill, and did not like to shew it, so he kept from home, to avoid the complaints which he knew he should hear; but an affectionate parent, whose existence was wrapt in that of an only darling son, soon discovered the ailment, and, with tender anxiety, sought to alleviate the evil, by the first medical advice. But what has medical advice, or all the physicians in the world, to do with a ruined constitution and a diseased mind? And Stamford's mother, with increased dismay, beheld her son, of early and blooming promise, a victim to what she called the "artifices of an unprincipled woman." These were harsh expressions; but let the apparent hardness of the case plead for her—a mother losing a son; that son——But we have already been over that ground; and every time, when a favourable opportunity occurred, she would say—"This is all Anne Wycherly's doing;

and now she is going to love another, or does love another;" and as Charles's looks grew more pallid, and his figure weaker and thinner, she could not restrain the force of angry feeling—of resentment and indignation; but, every where she went, she told the tale of Anne's trifling, in true, yet deepened colours.

## CHAPTER IV.

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There was a time when I could smile—

It never more shall be;

And not a charm can now beguile

The thoughts which once were free;

For all of earth that I have lov'd,

And all of earth that ever mov'd,

Is swallow'd up in thee;

In thee is all I could adore,

And thou art lost for evermore.

Fashionable and Polite Repository.

It was after a card party, at which Mrs. Wycherly had been present, that Mrs. Stamford sat down to rest herself from

performing the honours ; her friends were all gone, and Charles had retired to his room, under the plea of illness. From "four by honours," and "the odd trick," her thoughts insensibly wandered to her son, and from him to the source of all her inquietude ; and, as she dwelt with painful earnestness on his indisposition, her heart kindled against Anne with more than usual severity. She had her, in her "mind's eye," with her bright eyes, and "just tinged cheek," as she saw her smiling on lord Alfred's arm : she did not remember her as she had seen her, pale and ill on the sofa ; but she brought her, restored in all her health, to her imagination, triumphing in the past, no longer touched with remorse or repentance, no longer grieved at the part she had acted towards her son—oh ! one of the best of sons—"But she must be punished," she said ; and, as she spoke, tears rushed into her eyes—"She *shall*," she exclaimed, and she sobbed with more than a mother's anguish. Her eyes, amid the dimness of

unwiped tears, beheld, at the extremity of the room, a thin form advancing towards her; it came with unsteady and unequal steps, faltering as it moved.—“What do you want, ma’am?” she inquired, in a tone of distance; for she saw it was Anne Wycherly’s countenance and form. “Surely you have made some mistake?”

“I have made no mistake,” she replied, in a humbled voice; “I want your forgiveness—and that of your son’s—before I die!” again she stopped.

“Before you die!” repeated Mrs. Stamford; and a moment after, when the suffering girl came nearer to her, she was ashamed of the tone in which she had spoken—instinctively she offered her a chair, and asked her to sit.

“I cannot sit; I came only for forgiveness; and as you hope for mercy in your dying hour, give mercy to me!”

“You must not talk of dying,” said Mrs. Stamford, interrupting her; “you

must think of lord Alfred, and get well, for *his* sake."

"Lord Alfred!" and the anguish of sorrow melted into astonishment and surprise.

"Yes; but I am sure *I* forgive you; as to my son—and I am sure, if he sees you, he can do no less," said Mrs. Stamford, bursting into tears.

"Bless you! bless you for that!" said Anne, in a broken voice; "it will be so delightful to die forgiven by all! Tell him—oh! you may tell him, when I am gone—how bitterly I repented; how dearly I do—did—love him."

Mrs. Stamford would have spoken comfort, but she knew not from what to draw it; she could not even utter a syllable; but her tears were even kinder than any thing she could have said.

Had Anne been in health, in gaiety, or cheerfulness, she would have treated her with scorn, with contempt, or indignity; but these emotions melted into a tenderer sentiment, as she stood before her, weak,

humbled, and repentant—a being on the verge of the tomb, trembling and subdued by illness and self-reproach ; she no longer considered her as the high-spirited triumphant girl, whose vivid passions had been her guide, but as a dying person, whom she wished to forgive, nay, if possible, to restore her to the health and peace of mind she had lost. She implored her to sit ; to even pardon her past negligences, her little coolnesses, which had been more the effect of motherly feeling towards her son's peace, than unchristianlike sentiments towards her ; and she named those reports which Mrs. Allman had so sedulously spread, as being, in a great measure, the source of her haughty and reserved conduct towards her ; and, in conversation of a mixed nature, an hour passed rapidly away.

“ I must now return,” said Anne, in whose countenance there spread a calm serene joy. “ I think I can die happy—Mrs. Stamford—farewell !” She raised a powerless hand to that of her friend, and

was raising that hand in tremulous eagerness to her lips, when the brilliant eyes on which Mrs. Stamford was looking with affectionate interest, became suddenly dim, and the thin figure fell forwards into her arms, without life or motion. She soon perceived it was a fainting fit, and the alarm she had at first experienced died away, on hearing a short gasping voice say — “ Oh ! don’t be frightened—it is only weakness ; I am better now. I wish to get back through the folding-doors, as Beatrice, my DEAR sister, will come to watch me to sleep ; and I do not wish her to know I have seen you.”

She rose in pronouncing these last words, and, supported by Mrs. Stamford, reached the doors of which she had spoken ; and, as they closed on her, and she heard the parting words — “ Good night ! ” Mrs. Stamford fancied they were the last she should ever hear her speak, and she gave way to tears—tears of bitter grief.

“ Mother,” said Stamford, in the morning, as he looked into her countenance,

"I need not ask you how you are—you are ill."

"A little distressed in my mind," she replied, looking away from him. "I was up late last night. Poor Anne Wycherly—" and tears spoke the rest—"she is dying."

Stamford thought she was dead at first, but dared not ask the question, hoping his mother would at once dash at the fatal truth. His countenance could not change, for it was then pale as death, with that sickly hue of consumption which it was fearful to see.—"I suppose," he said, after a long pause, speaking firmly, and, as his mother thought, with considerable force, "Anne is much worse?" and his tone suddenly altering, he added—"I really wish to know."

Mrs. Stamford, in a few words, related to him all that had passed: she spoke of Anne as one near unto death—as one she forgave with all her heart; and she would give the world, were it in her possession, to restore her to health and happiness.—

"If you could but see her, Charles," she said——

"If I could but see her, mother! I don't think it would make any impression on me; yet, I *do* forgive her," he said.

"Will you try to see her?" inquired his mother.

"I! oh no—it could only disturb her, and make her worse. I see you think *I* flinch from the trial; it will be no trial to *me*."

This was language and sentiments Mrs. Stamford did not expect from Charles, who had been so devotedly, so fondly attached. Was it the vice, the futile pleasures of a corrupt and licentious course of life, which had blunted his better reason, his better feeling, and the common humanity of nature?

"It is odd, if Anne is so very ill, none of her family are sent for from Brundale," he said.

"A letter was dispatched this morning, to say she was not expected to live; and the physician gives few, indeed no hopes

of her recovery. As a last resource, doctor Hayward is sent for from Y—, where he is staying. She had always a great respect and faith in him. This does not look as if she could last long.”

Charles made no reply; but after his mother left the room, he continued to pace up and down with an uneasy step and abstracted manner, and continued to do so until a servant came from Mrs. Wycherly's, to say—“ Her daughter was so ill, she would esteem it as a favour if no noise was made in the room adjoining hers—she could not bear it.”

“ Very ill ?” said Charles to the servant, in a tone of inquiry.

“ Yes, sir; I believe Miss Anne won't last the day out. Miss Beatrice, sir, is very much cut up.”

“ *She* begins to fear then,” thought Charles, as the servant left the room; and *he* then began to imagine Anne was really bidding farewell to all the joys and sorrows of *this* world. He listened as he laid on the sofa to passing sounds in the room

in which he knew she was; and sometimes he heard a footstep, lightly treading the floor—at others a low voice, apparently in prayer.

When he remembered she was passing away, where she would be no more seen, under the affliction of a long, severe, languishing sickness—that she had so deeply, repentantly spoken of him, he was touched to think he had not seen her—to shake hands as friends, and before the coffin lid was closed upon her, to say—“The past is forgiven and forgotten.” He again began to pace about, until a carriage, driving swiftly up, bespoke the arrival of three individuals: he paused to see them alight: first came out Mr. Wycherly—then Sawbridge—then Susan, whose face and figure brought back to his mind a thousand tender recollections; he could scarcely bear to look upon her, so much was connected with the dying Anne in the seeing of *her*. Slowly walking his horse, then next appeared doctor Hayward: he drew out his watch, looked at

it, and was preparing to alight, when Sawbridge appeared at the door.—“ A curious bet I have been making,” said he, sticking his cane on the end of his boot, and holding the face of his watch down towards Sawbridge.

“ Sir !” said Sawbridge, falling back, and different emotions passing over his countenance.

“ A curious bet, I tell you. Let me see—” ruminating—“ let me see——”

Sawbridge, during the time the doctor was pausing, found time to hope he would make haste, for his sister was very ill.

“ Ah, *I* can't save her,” said he. “ Do you know, I have won my bet by ten minutes ? I have been seeing how long it took me to walk my horse these ten miles *here*.”

“ Then,” said Sawbridge, with honest indignation spreading all over his features, “ you may see how long it takes you to walk your horse those ten miles *back* ;” and without hazarding another word, he closed the door in his face.

Charles Stamford saw the whole transaction, secretly pleased with Sawbridge for his spirit, and indignant against the doctor for his cruel carelessness ; but other emotions possessed his heart, when, on returning to the sofa, he distinctly heard, through the folding-doors, the words—“ Beatrice, let Mrs. Stamford speak to me ;” and in another moment it was followed by the sentence—“ This weak breath of mine seems just expiring—God bless you all !”

“ She is now going,” he thought, and he moved nearer to the folding-doors, and his heart, which till then appeared hard, melted ; he thought of her as his first, his only love—as the lovely girl who had tried the strength of his love by trifling—as she who, generous, frank, and kind, had only erred in one solitary instance against him : he started up to the door, and had, in the energy of his despair, opened it a few inches before he remembered what he was about.—“ *I must not enter,*” he thought, as, with dimmed eyes,

he withdrew back his head from the aperture: "I must not disturb her in her last moments—peaceful moments; yet my own feelings urge me to see her;" and he felt the low voice he then heard speaking comfort to those around, was that of her who was dying; he at least felt there could be no harm in giving her one last look; but in this he was prevented, for the curtains being drawn closely round her bed, hid her from his anxious gaze. He caught a glimpse of Beatrice—of Susan—of Mrs. Wycherly—all absorbed in grief; he had seen them kneeling, and heard prayers for the dying read in a broken voice by Beatrice: he heard one servant say to another, as they stood with their backs to the folding-doors—"She is going off—Oh, my God, she is gone!" They started forwards, as did he; no reason—no power of prudence—no fear of disturbing the suffering girl, had time to enter his mind—in a moment he was at her bedside; he pushed them away from

supporting Anne in *their* arms, and snatched her to his own. Another moment only served to convince him this immediate impulse of feeling—distracted and hasty feeling, had come too late; to his fond prayer, “that she would forgive *him*, the wretch who held her in his arms,” to all the names of tenderness which love, unrestrained and fresh awakened, suggested, no reply, no answer was returned; and it was not until he had repeatedly pressed the wasted figure in his arms, calling it by every endearing epithet, by every title he could form—that the closed eye (closed for ever on him and all the world beside), fringed with its fine dark lid—that indescribable hue, which death alone can give, which was settling on the countenance—with the lips, from which no reply could ever be given, compressed together as one who gently sinks to rest—and to the mournful silence which prevailed, convinced him he was alike too late to forgive or to be forgiven.

* * * * *

Miss Amherste felt startled when she heard Anne Wycherly was no more ; she tried to think it must be mere report, for Anne looked so well when she last saw her ; but the hearse, and the dark long train which followed, admitted no doubt of her death. Miss Amherste threw up the sash, and looked after it till it was entirely out of sight ; and then, turning to her mother, said—" So poor Anne Wycherly is gone to her last long home ! I could scarcely believe it could be true ; for I never considered her in a decline ; though she wasted, yet still I thought that was only grief, not disease. People do waste, when they grieve," and her eye fell upon her own thin hands, and an air of thoughtfulness, unusual to her, overspread her face.

" People ought not to give way to grief," said lady Amherste, cold-heartedly. " As for you, Juliet, *you* must go to town."

" Indeed," said Miss Amherste, " I had

rather not ; I can't bear town. I wish to remain here."

" And *I* must have you go somewhere, or you will fret yourself into a decline, as Anne Wycherly has done."

Miss Amherste ventured not another word ; for grief (which obtained an ascendancy over the passionate impulse of her temper) had so far made her passive to all her mother's arrangements, so far humbled the spirit of obstinate pride she once evinced, that she yielded in this and every other instance without a murmur, or a word of opposition.

Lady Amherste saw the splendour of her daughter's beauty was " upon the fade"—that her spirits were weak and depressed—her mind miserable and unhappy ; she knew no other cure for these mental diseases than company ; she never thought of administering advice, or soothing conversation to an afflicted heart, then awakening to a sense of its frailties and infirmities : she had once been in bad spirits herself, and a winter at Bath had cured *her* ; and

Juliet must go somewhere to change the scene; she must see new faces—new places, and all would be well with her.

“The man was unworthy of you,” lady Amherste once said to her daughter.

“Yes; but have I not been unworthy too?” she replied, in great anguish.

“Possibly; but you should not think of these things—it is no use fretting; I see you want society, and society you must have,” replied her ladyship; and she gave orders that a journey to town should take place on the Wednesday following.

“This is precipitate,” said Miss Amherste, as she darted hastily into the walks of the garden. “If my mother knew my state of mind, she would not press a thing which must cost me so much;” and giving way to a moment’s passion, she burst into a fit of tears. When she had recovered, she found herself in the little aviary; and her heart was touched by the many circumstances which crushed into her memory, as she, with a troubled heart and eye, remembered the hours (now for ever

gone by) which she had passed within it. A change had taken place since she had visited it; the gift cages were no longer tenanted, but hung, covered with cobwebs, in different parts of the room. A feeling of remorse and mortification—of sorrow for the past, and gloomy retrospect of the future, made her seat herself on the chair nearest to her, and recall scenes at once admonishing and distressing to her feelings. It was in that place Mr. Faulkner, with firm, yet generous sentiments, had warned her against the ill-fated *Haverill*, even at the moment she was deceiving *him*; it was there she had so often listened to his voice, which would be heard by her no more; and it was there the gay Haverill had won the affections he never meant to return; and it was there she was, a desolate wretched being, sick at her own fate, and lamenting the past, without a single hope or comfort for the future: she knew not from what source to derive consolation; no mother of extensive or enlarged education, and religious principle,

was at hand to calm the darkened and perplexed mind. Lady Amherste saw her daughter unhappy, and the only cure for that malady, as *she* thought, was *company*, the worst thing indeed calculated for a female like her daughter, at least the state of mind she was then in; it might damp any good impression—it might for a time seduce the awakening spirit from itself—but it could be of no real use to a heart so truly miserable as was hers.

It should seem that many things peculiarly conspired to awaken Miss Amherste to a sense of her former conduct. In the death of Anne Wycherly, she felt herself chill; in the idea that a broken heart, caused by her ill conduct to a man she loved, was the ultimate cause of the consumption of which she died, made *her* reflect, if such a trifle (for she considered it as a trifle) caused such deep remorse, what ought *she* not to feel?

“So,” said she, to her woman, as she was dressing her hair, “you saw Miss

Wycherly's funeral? Did Mr. Stamford follow?"

"Oh yes, ma'am, as chief mourner—just as a husband would; and then Miss Beatrice and Miss Susan. But Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly were not there. Then went a train of the Brundale poor people and charity children. It was very affecting; and poor Miss Beatrice was so pale and shrunk; and Miss Susan looked like death. I just got up to the vault time enough to see the coffin; and at that very moment, poor Mr. Stamford was looking in, just as if he wished it was his instead of hers; and then young Mr. Sawbridge came up, and pulled his arm within his, and led him away."

"But you told me of some letter?" said Miss Amherste, quickly.

"Yes, ma'am, there is one for you, in poor Miss Anne's own writing; and I dare say you will have it to-day, for John Adams (who, by the bye, was the waiting-woman's Platonic friend) had got it in his pocket then."

"Why did he not bring it yesterday?" asked Miss Amherste.

"Miss Beatrice, ma'am, asked him to give it back to her, to enclose to you, for she could not bear it should be sent as Mrs. Wycherly *had* sent it to you; she wanted to write a few lines too."

Before the evening came, Miss Amherste received the letter; it was, as her woman said, in an envelope of Beatrice's, in which, with some difficulty, she deciphered the following words:—

"DEAR MISS AMHERSTE,

"Our dear Anne, when dying, requested the letter you will receive within this to be forwarded to you: *her* requests must be complied with by us, with sacred and scrupulous care. I know you will most readily pardon that which I find it impossible to repress, when I write of one now never more to bless us by her presence—I mean the tears which blot the paper on which I am writing. My

heart is too full to admit my saying any more ; only how much I am,

“ Your sincere friend,

“ And wellwisher,

“ B. W.”

Anne's letter was simply this :—

“ When my dear Miss Amherste receives this, the hand which will have written it, the intellect which composed it, will be lifeless in the grave ; it may then be supposed to make a greater and more lasting impression on her to whom it is addressed, for the appeal of the dead falls with more weight on the human mind, than the advice of the living : both may together warn my dear Miss A. of a fate which is at once pernicious to her future and present happiness. She who trifles with the peace of a human being, knows not for how much she is responsible ; she dives not into the world

of futurity, but plays a specious part for a short time, and thinks it will soon be over. In this she is lamentably mistaken; her conception is hidden by a 'dark and shadowy mist;' her mind led away by triumphant vanity, wrapt in its own beams of self-gratification, and heeds not the pang of misery it is hoarding up for her at some future (perhaps a deathbed) hour. What we would give then to recall some few scenes in our existence, to wipe away a few past deeds, and to lay our heads down in calm peacefulness to die! You will not permit yourself to be angry with me, when you reflect, nothing but a strong wish to further your happiness could make me take the liberty of appealing to you, as I now do; for it is not so easy for one so near death as I am to write a long epistle. I do not shudder (though I did some time since) at the dark cold tomb gradually approaching nearer to me; and when you have received this, I shall be an inhabitant of it. I rather rejoice I shall so soon be in peace, though

my sisters, my parents, and the world itself, yet holds some dear beings to whom I could and do cling; but I must go far from them—I must pass away, and be no more seen. The days of vanity, of false delusive pleasure, how in my dying illness they have disturbed me! and it is against such a misery I would warn you. Take then, as it is meant, this last letter—the last *I* shall ever dictate. The world has opened upon *you*, as it did on *me*, with visions of glorious promise. I darkened mine, by conduct which kills me with self-reproach; be you warned ere it is too late; avoid the rock on which I split; and if I have any weight in your mind, let me entreat you to trifle no longer, and to think of that which will give you peace on your deathbed. It is with tears, bitter tears, I must take my last farewell of beings I love; and that I now with feeble hand draw this letter to a close. Think of me, now passed away, whither no mortal eye can explore, and on which the heightened enlarged imagination of man can only sur-

mise a faint idea; all that is left of me will be remembrance, and with that, in mercy to yourself and others, take warning by me—think of my keen sufferings—the distraction attendant on an unprofitable course of life, such as mine once was—think of my bitter tears—my anguish of mental pain.

“ I had written thus far, when Beatrice, my DEAR sister, came in ; she mentioned you, and asked me to write no more ; it is, therefore, with feelings of considerable pain, I am now bidding you farewell !—an everlasting farewell ! for though no peculiar friendship has subsisted between us, yet that lingering affection to life, which so often hovers on the deathbed of the young, makes me sad to think I shall see you, nor write to you no more. Believe me to be in death, as I was in life, your sincere and faithful friend,

“ ANNE WYCHERLY.”

The letter had been written two days

before the death of the individual who composed it; it was sealed with black, and a little impression she had received from Charles Stamford—a serpent, and the words “Eternal Fidelity,” engraven on it. The hand indeed was distorted, and far different to the fine Italian manner in which she generally used to write; the fluent formation of the letters was subdued into indistinct and trembling characters; the whole bespoke that it cost the writer some difficulty to make it intelligible to the reader. That it was the last she ever wrote, Miss Amherste made no doubt; for it required not much penetration to perceive in that, it was the last effort of expiring intellect; many small words omitted, and others misspelt, together, combined with the crookedness and irregularity of the lines, convinced her it *was* her last effort. It at once melted her into tears; it subdued the haughtiness of nature; and she felt touched that one now in another world had thought it even worth her while to give a word of

advice to her, who, till then, had seemed to scorn reproof—not to laugh at religion, but to hear a jest on it without testifying disgust; she who had trifled and trifled—coquetted and coquetted, till came the “payday” home to her own bosom.

She was aroused from the distressing feeling of overlooking her past conduct, by the entrance of her woman, who came from lady Amherste, to inquire what dresses and trunks she intended to have got in readiness for town?

“For town! I do not know I shall go to town,” said Miss Amherste, in a broken voice; “I had rather remain here.”

“My lady says, ma’am, it will do you good. She told me, at the latest, she was going the day after to-morrow—perhaps to-morrow.”

“I shall not go—I cannot. If my mother did but understand my feelings——” said Miss Amherste, hesitating.

“Oh, ma’am, my lady says she knows exactly how you feel. My lady says she was just so herself once, and would never

have been any better, if she had not gone into company."

Miss Amherste looked to the door, and her woman ceased speaking to close it.— "Go," she said, after a moment's pause, "go, and tell my mother she knows not how much my happiness depends on my not going to town: and do not pack up my trunks, or arrange my dresses, till you hear further from me." And once more having silence and solitude for her own, she re-read that letter, which promised to be the second grand step to a revolution in the sentiments of her heart.

CHAPTER V.

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BUT they who think that a single emotion of remorse can draw to the paths of peace, by its efforts at good, the individual who, for years, has been engaged in pursuits dissonant to virtue, are most



egregiously wrong; it requires time, constant application to the even path of happiness, which is founded on duty, veneration for all that is pure and lovely, to do away the past errors, and still the agonies of repentance, which, but for those errors, would never have existed.

Lady Amherste, contrary to all her daughter's hopes, took her to town, but to her own house; she was not content with having a party of young ladies always at her house, and be vies of beaux in constant attendance, but she hurried her daughter from place of amusement to place of amusement, and at last, with some dismay, observed, that in the continual whirl and tempest of society, the bud of beauty began to fade; yet it was with feelings of pleasure she observed Juliet *did* smile—*did* enjoy company, and enter into it with avidity and delight.

“There is a visiting ticket left yesterday,” said lady Amherste, one morning, to her daughter, “from the Faulkners, I perceive.”

"The Faulkners!" said Miss Amherste, with an air of recollection, and considerable embarrassment, which could not pass by unnoticed as she took it up.

"Yes. They are in slight mourning for Anne Wycherly, I hear. I like their leaving that ticket—it looks friendly," continued her ladyship; "you see it contains a few words to invite us to a ball."

"Not a waltz ball, I *hope*," said Miss Amherste. "Not that I shall dance—for my dancing days are over."

"A quadrille ball, I *hope*," said another lady.

"No balls for me," advanced a third, "for I cannot endure any thing but reels and lemonade. Oh dear! what shall we do with ourselves this morning?—Miss Amherste, what shall we do? I am tired of my own existence. There is the harp—but I am sick of harp playing; there is the piano—one cannot always be playing that."

"Shall we read?" said one of the most rational of the party.

"Read! No — reading makes one's head ache; reading is intolerable: besides, we must *all* do something."

"There is the bagatelle board, tactics, drawings, colours, books—pray amuse yourselves," said lady Amherste, as she left the room; "and the carriage is at your service whenever you wish."

"Ah, let us go somewhere," said the most indolent lady, getting up.

"Go! Where shall we go? The park is empty, and every thing is so horribly stupid," said another—"where *should* we go?"

"I will tell you," advanced Miss Amherste; "let us go *shopping*."

"Ah, let us go shopping, and see fashions," said all the party, and they ascended to their toilets with a little more animation than they had descended. Miss P—— declared she wanted a scarf, and lady Anne G—— a gown, Miss G—— a pair of gloves, and Miss Amherste wanting what gold could not purchase—peace of mind.

The carriage was at the door, and the ladies got in it, and away they dashed to a fashionable milliner's, killing time as they said, little dreaming Time would one day be even with *them*. Once in the show-rooms, they began to admire—to criticise the caps, the bonnets, the pelisses, the dresses, and the silks, keeping the milliner's women in constant employ for two hours; but, oh! it was only killing time, *pour passer le tems*. Miss G—— was the first who thought of *buying*; and she said she wanted a pair of lilac gloves.

“Lilac gloves?” They were produced.

“These are a blue lilac,” said Miss G——, “and blue lilacs I detest most abominably.”

The woman reached down another paper, of pink lilacs.

“Pink lilacs! Oh, *they* were hideous!”

The woman, with the patience of a saint, took down another paper, the real lilac, just such as Miss G—— expressed a wish to have, and she presented a pair for her inspection.

“ Ah, they were the colour ; but she feared they would spot. She liked the hue—but lilac altogether was a sad fading colour ; they were very pretty, certainly. No, she would not have lilac at all, she would have lemon colour.”

A paper of lemon-coloured gloves met with the same fate ; Miss G——, from the first, only wished to look at them, and declined taking *any*.

Lady Anne G—— could nowhere discover a dress she liked ; gros de Naples, satins, silks, nets, &c. &c. were dragged over—but no gown was chosen.

As for Miss P——, she would look at some scarfs, and some were accordingly shewn her ; and at last her fancy became charmed by one with a border of roses, embroidered at the bottom.

“ I may put it up then for you, ma'am ?” said the milliner, folding it up.

“ Yes. Though really I do not know—the price is very high ; it is certainly very pretty. Stay ; I have not made up my mind. No ; do not fold it up : I have

four or five now—and that embroidery grows old so soon. No, I will not take it.—GOOD MORNING !” and off they went. And it was with such beings as these, light butterflies of fashion and hollow vanity, Miss Amherste was associated ; and the arm which had been stretched forth to save her, seemed withdrawn for ever.

Lady Anne Fashionist was tutored privately, by lady Amherste, to ridicule low spirits, and to ask Juliet to all her parties ; the young ladies who were her companions, were informed they must amuse her mind, and they found less hardship than they imagined in so doing ; a sense of right had shot athwart her mind like a vision—it was passed and gone, as a dream vanishes in the waking hour. There was no kind, well-instructed individual to sooth the aggrieved mind, or to renovate those feelings which might never again return, for Time was, with steady and mouldering fingers, wiping away the traces of the horror occasioned by lord Haverill’s death. Anne Wycherly’s letter had, till

the London journey, been read at least once a-day; but since that time, it had been, Miss Amherste knew not where—either in her writing-desk or table drawer, or any where else, for aught she knew: Beatrice too had signified a wish to correspond with her (at the suggestion of Anne, who foresaw much ultimate good might accrue); she had, in consequence of her wishes, written twice to Miss Amherste, but had received no answer. Following doctor Johnson's rule, she wrote a third time; but that met with no better success. She then wrote no more: yet she could not help occasionally inquiring after her, and with concern heard she was engaged almost always in gaiety. Perhaps the best elucidation we can give, of how she was pursuing her time, is in Miss Faulkner's letter to Susan Wycherly.

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“You ask me concerning Miss Amherste: she was at a ball we gave on the sixteenth instant; she came with lady

Anne Fashionist, her aunt, and several ladies staying with her. My brother immediately went forward, and spoke to her kindly. She seemed indifferent to this; but when she came up to me, her countenance underwent a slight change, and I observed she looked for a moment embarrassed and pained. She asked me repeatedly—‘Do not you think I am dreadfully altered?’—To which I could not help replying, not ‘*dreadfully*’ altered—thinner and paler than usual.—‘Ah!’ said she, ‘I came without paint to-night; I am obliged to use it. Pray is this to be a waltz ball?’—I said—‘No; my brother dislikes them; he despises waltzing.’—‘Does he?’ said she, with an affectation of not knowing—for it must be affectation.—‘Yes; do you not remember how much he has inveighed against them?’ said I; and then I feared I had said too much.—‘Oh yes,’ she answered, ‘I know he was scrupulous; but I hate to remember all those horrid things, which only make me miserable now. Do not mistake me; I mean—in fact, I do



not know what I mean. I wish that this had been a waltz ball, for I adore waltzing.' She spoke with fretful peevishness; and as she went away from me, I saw so much alteration in her figure (whether occasioned by late hours or grief I know not), that even I pitied her.

"My brother tells me lady Anne Fashionist is a woman of the world—one whom we would avoid rather than copy. Lady Amherste is similar to her, only not gifted with such bright intellectual intellects as her sister; she is politic, as is lady Anne; and he argues there is more danger in being the friend of the former-named lady than the latter, for she is so fascinating, that you feel inclined to forgive even her follies, when you are in her society. As for myself, I do not pretend to understand human nature; so whether Miss Amherste is even now playing a part, I cannot take upon me to determine; but time must eventually discover the truth, and to time I must leave her."

Lady Anne Fashionist had considerable merit in winning her niece to her parties; she often took her by surprise—still often—by storm—and as often as both put together, by the simple words—“ Oh, *you* MUST come; what will my room look without you ?” or—“ Juliet Amherste refuse her aunt Fashionist’s parties! No, that cannot be !”

“ It must be, indeed,” Miss Amherste would say sometimes, when the weariness inherent on excessive gaiety was upon her.

But her aunt led her off, by saying—“ No, you will not spoil my parties; they *are* stupid—but do not make them worse than they need be. Besides, I want to get you into fashion.

“ TO GET INTO FASHION,” she would repeat, “ is a most excellent thing—the summit of Fortune’s wheel; it is to be admired for every thing you do—every thing you say. In fact, you cannot do a single thing ill. See what a fine thing it is to be in fashion—universally sought after, admired, envied, and criticised! fifty

glasses all levelled at you, with the hurried inquiry of—‘Who is that?’—‘Oh, Miss Amherste! A sweet girl—all the rage just now.’—‘Ah, indeed! one must beg an introduction.’ Beaux to the balls, plays, operas, by dozens. I give a ball—you the magnet of attraction; I invite fifty more than my rooms will hold; those who come last, after a jumble, a push, and a squeeze, *hear* that you looked divinely, but left the ball-room early, because you were fatigued—universal sorrow on this account, and the next day a hundred inquiries (unmeaning ones I grant) after your health. This it is to be the fashion—and all this it is my wish you should be. Besides, then is your time to settle for life.”

Miss Amherste struck a full chord on her harp, and drowned her ladyship’s voice.

“I talk of a small masked ball,” said lady Anne, and the wires were left to themselves; “but I do not know how it will be.”

“A *masked* ball! Oh, ma’am, no one

here has half spirit enough to carry on such a thing!"

"Yes, *you* have—you must; I have absolutely brought a list of characters for you," said lady Anne.

"Then indeed it will be useless," said Miss Amherste, with some force: "no masked balls for me."

"That is an odd way of refusing an invitation," said lady Anne; "but I am disposed to indulge you. Come, look over the list I have made, and let us set the world on fire by something *outré*."

Miss Amherste looked at the list, and, by the merest chance in the world, her finger rested on one of the characters for half a minute; lady Anne snatched it from her, exclaiming—"Oh! you have chosen DEATH! Oh, that is horrid! A man's character too," she added; "no, no, it must not be."

"Rather say ominous," said Miss Amherste, lifting up her languid eyes; "every thing here is a mask, I think."

"And every where else too, my dear

Juliet. All I ask is, that you will choose a character, and then I will fix the day, and all will be settled."

"Then no one shall know *my* character," said Miss Amherste, apparently acceding to the plan. "If your ladyship pleases to fix the day, you *may*. Pleasure cries,

' And quickly calls,  
Away, away to Vanity Hall.'

My head aches intolerably, and my heart too. You may laugh, but indeed it is so. I would give something to be at peace in the country for a month—any where, from the distraction attendant on company; do but look, my dear aunt, how thin I am getting, and how pale I am: and then I am subdued to use *rouge*; mademoiselle said I should. Ah! mademoiselle has a great deal to answer for," she added.

"So we have all," said lady Anne, with the utmost *sang froid*; "misspent time—lost time—and time spent in folly: but

what is to be done? we must go with the crowd; it is next to an impossibility to stop a current; and when all the world is doing one thing, we cannot be singular, in doing another."

Miss Amherste was silent, and lady Anne went home, to desire her companion to write cards of invitation directly to her numerous acquaintance.

Miss Amherste, whose heart was nearly broken, no sooner found herself alone, than she burst into tears; her mind was unsettled, wavering, and discomforted, and her disposition subdued; she saw no happiness beaming for her: a long train of endless amusements (which to her were any thing but amusements) only appeared, and on them she dared not dilate; and gladly would she have sought peace in retirement, but that was denied her. As she thought of all her friends, or those who styled themselves so, not one seemed to appreciate her feelings—all drew her into society, telling her she must not

grieve, and lose her beauty—that beauty which she grew so indifferent in preserving.

“What is to be done with Juliet?—she alters dreadfully,” said lady Anne. “My dear sister, indeed she is losing her beauty; and I hate paint to be resorted to so soon; it is a last resource, when the campaigns in fashion have ruined one’s complexion.”

“I do not know indeed,” said lady Amherste, “what is to be done with her. Spring will soon be here, then we must go to the sea. I cannot think of any thing else.”

“Nor I,” advanced lady Anne. “Pray make her in spirits at my ball to-morrow. What is her dress?”

“That of a nun, I fancy,” answered lady Amherste, carelessly; “but in truth I do not know, so do not depend on me; I merely saw a veil in her dressing-room, resembling a nun’s, so I may, in all human probability, be wrong; I dislike to intrude on her, for she seems worse than

ever in her spirits. Pray how did you get through your game at piquet the other night? Lord Peckover seemed at daggers' draw with you. I wonder whether he intends to marry ever. I wish my Juliet was settled—in her *mind*, I mean. Bless me, what a beautiful shawl yours is! How much did it cost you? Madame Trib's, I suppose? you have such a very excellent choice. Pray do just stop now, and play chess with me half an hour, to kill time, for my visitors here are mad after your masked ball.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

The masked ball proved (what hundreds have done before) a very stupid thing. Lady Anne had been witty on two ladies, whose daughters she had expressly invited as singers in a band of Savoyards. At first she anticipated, from their ready acquiescence in the invitation, that they were, what they said, "delighted" and "charmed" with the idea; she even troubled herself to help them select dresses for the occasion, "building



up," as one of the senior ladies said, "her own disappointment;" and the speech was concluded by a smile of ironical pleasure, such a one, that had lady Anne seen it, would have revealed what was meditated against her. Ill-fated being! she dreamed not of any retaliation being made on *her* conduct, for all the ladies seemed so smiling—so sweetly calm—so unresisting to go; and to add one more degree of delight, they were "enchanted" to be "Savoyards," as *she* thought *they* would, because they had remarkable fine voices, and were not prudish in displaying them; but the mammas, "breathing revenge," secretly intended lady Anne's ball should be flat, if it was in their power to make it so. Consequently, when the musical overture was over, and some masks had made their appearance, and the rooms began to fill, her ladyship began to look for her Savoyards; none however appeared—she was on thorns—and another hour elapsed.

"Lady Anne," said a domino, who

knew her ladyship in hers, "you promised us some female glee singing."

"My Savoyards are not come—I shall send, for I thought they would be the attraction of the whole room;" and lady Anne finding suspense no longer endurable, dispatched one of her footmen to the ladies G—— and the Misses D——. "Besides," she added, "my niece is not here—and she sings well—and I find myself flat."

She mingled with some of her visitors a short time after—found she had ballad-singers without voices—characters without sense to support them—and that half, or more than half, her company were dependent on the other half to entertain them—and that the other half were thinking too much on what they were to say, to say any thing worth hearing.

"Mr. Faulkner," said lady Anne, whose anxiety that her ball should go off well became beyond endurance, "pray tell some of my people to bring in refresh-

ments ; we are so *very* flat. I can't think where my Savoyards are."

The footman she had dispatched to their several residences, at that moment brought two small notes, and presented them to his mistress.

"*Neatly* folded and sealed," she said, with some indignation. "All that, of course, took time; but these people are inclined to torment."

The notes said they were "inexpressibly sorry," and so forth: they "had colds," "were not in voice;" and one lady had actually been so unfortunate as to sprain her ancle, and was very much chagrined to be obliged to give up the masked ball altogether.

Lady Anne opened the other note with no better success: the lady G——s were  
INDISPOSED.

"*I* know what this means," said lady Anne. "*I* can torment—and at some future day—and they may depend upon my services. All this seems ill-natured to your unfashionable ears; but if we did

not revenge ourselves in some manner or other, we should be utterly lost."

Mr. Faulkner could not agree with lady Anne—he therefore only bowed—bowed and passed on; to him all was masquerade, and as even dull novelty can please, he seated himself near a mask, whose figure reminded him of a young lady to whom he had paid considerable attentions; he therefore entered into conversation with her, or rather would have done so; but he found she was fearful of trusting to her masquerade voice, and therefore only spoke excepting in monosyllables; her eyes he perceived were bright and intelligent, altogether too beautiful for Miss Parr's, whom he had fancied it was.

She seemed disturbed at his close examination of her, and said—"It is not possible you *can* know me; and if any thing unusual occurs—but nothing will occur."

She was moving away; but Mr. Faulkner followed her, and catching her by the mantle of her dress, said—"I will seek to

know nothing you may wish to hide from me."

"You will not?" she answered, in a tone of inquiry; "then I will stay. I only wish you to tell me which is lady Anne Fashionist?"

"Which is lady Anne Fashionist?" advanced Mr. Faulkner, and he almost started at the question.

"Don't be surprised: remember what you said just now: you think it strange *I* am here, and do not even know her. So it is."

Mr. Faulkner could not forbear raising his eyes to the mask; and as he did so, she turned abruptly away.

"Lady Anne is terribly chagrined about some singers — some Savoyards; everybody knew they were coming, and are disappointed to think they do not now intend it," he said, merely to change the conversation.

"Suppose *I* sing?" said the mask.

"I wish you would," he added, in his natural tone; for the natural expression

of his voice could no longer be controlled.

"I used to sing well, but am out of practice now," she answered; "and I used to be happy; but now I am miserable—yet I deserve it all."

Mr. Faulkner made no comment on the words he heard, but continued to press his companion to sing, with more than usual earnestness.

Still protesting she could not, she began,

---

*BALLAD.*

"If in foreign lands thou roam  
Far from friends, and far from home,  
Still some joy to thee is near—  
Hope may whisper peace in store,  
And picture to thee thy own shore,  
And stanch thy tear.

"For thee some anxious heart may beat,  
Some tear of rapture may thee greet;  
Ah! some JOY to THEE is near;  
But I, who once her smiles could gain,  
Shall never know that bliss again,  
Nor stanch my tear.

"Others may have hearts befriend them;  
Blessings Heaven itself may send them—  
Then, on earth, oh what their fear?

But I, from all these comforts banish'd,  
Find *my* hope, *my* heaven vanish'd—  
Nor stanch *my* tear.

“Mystic woes my heart assailing—”

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“Bless me!” said a young Cupid, pressing into the circle which had formed round the mask whilst she was singing; “Love and Music must be united—indeed they act upon each other; so let *me* come.”

“And Virtue—let Virtue be also in unison,” said a moralist, close at hand.

Mr. Faulkner felt the mask press her fingers on his arm; but as she had told him to take no notice of her feelings, he took no observation of the impulse, but continued to implore her to finish the ballad she had began.

“Ah, finish your ditty,” said a jockey, cracking his whip, and at whose voice a considerable tremour agitated the mask’s frame—“pray finish; we are flat: this is not life in masquerade: ’tis terribly stupid—every body is listening, and no

one speaking. 'Pon my soul, it is not to be endured !"

" Oh no ; and since you wish for life," said a mask, bounding forward in the character of LIFE, " here I am."

The languid softness of the voice—the beautiful elasticity of the shape—combined with the exquisite hair, falling in richly-curved ringlets, in a moment discovered to Mr. Faulkner it was no other than Miss Amherste ; and for a short time he ventured to gaze on her features, dimly discernible through a transparent mask, with that sort of curiosity which ever must be given to those we have once loved.

The character she had assumed formed a fine field for puns : the jockey himself ventured to hint—" Life was every thing."

" See," said the mask, whom Mr. Faulkner still kept by him, " is it not singular—there is a Death as well as Life in the room ? Look how Death keeps hovering by this beautiful Life."

Mr. Faulkner raised his eyes, and beheld a mask in that character at a short



distance from Miss Amherste, and so well contrived, that it appeared the complete figure of the King of terrors.

"How came Miss Amherste to think of assuming the character of Life?" said a young lady.

"Because she likes to do extraordinary things," replied another; "and hates to be like the world in general. Poor thing! when her mask is off at supper (for we are all to unmask at supper) you will see if she is not immensely painted—that she is terribly faded—all her fine complexion gone?"

"Hark!" said the younger speaker; "they are going to sing."

"Oh! it would not be Miss Amherste, if she did not display her voice: I dare say it will be all fine—very fine. Death and Life singing a duet! there is really something *outré* in that."

"Do pray listen!" said the first speaker again, with some tokens of impatience, "for the voice is sweet."

The voice *was* sweet; and the breath-

less attention of the surrounding masks, to both the air and the words; signified they at least thought them so. Though less powerful than usual, Miss Amherste's voice was not the less interesting; it had rich cultivation, taste, and mildness, to recommend it; and even the lady who said she thought it would all "be fine—very fine," caught herself listening to the measure.

"Oh!" exclaimed a mask, whom it was not difficult to discover was lady Anne herself, to a domino near her, speaking in a suppressed tone, "I told Juliet her illness was all imaginary—merely a fit of the spleen and vapours, which a masquerade must cure. She said she was too weak to sing—hear how she carries it off!"

The domino listened, and did not perfectly acquiesce in her ladyship's remark; he was too polite, however, to hazard a word to the contrary, but contented himself by moving near enough to the masks of Life and Death, and hearing lady Anne's disquisition on the merits of her

niece being in the character of Life—one she had chosen from a thousand fantastic others—one also selected from a picture then in high repute, in which Life was represented as a blooming figure, clad in robes of white and crimson: she had imitated those robes as far as she was able; but lady —, who loved to lash every one, said Miss Amherste would have shone more in DEATH than in LIFE.

“As all beauties do,” thought Mr. Faulkner; and with great interest he listened to the duet sung by the masks, then chanting it near him.

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DUET.

*Life.*—“All that is blooming—all that is fair,  
Is by my fostering hand so cherish’d.”

*Death.*—“All that is lovely, young, and rare,  
By my dark hand is snapp’d and perish’d;  
So boast not of that sovereign power,  
Which I can wither in an hour;  
Boast not a bloom which I can fade,  
As soon as e’er that bloom is made;  
If thou canst make a flower bloom,  
’Tis I can call it to its tomb.”

“ How horrid to sing of tombs in a masquerade !” said a lady, stopping her ears. “ Pray let me get away ! I hate to hear of such dismal things !” and she pressed her way out of the circle, which was almost immediately filled up by Mr. Faulkner’s unknown companion. She still kept hold of his arm ; and if she had not carefully eluded his eyes, by keeping her mask on during the time of refreshments, he would have imagined it was only a *ruse de guerre*, incident to the place and amusement ; but there was a tremulous emotion in some of her actions, and a more than ordinary affectation of voice, which excited his curiosity.

“ At supper we unmask, I fancy ?” she said to him, as another party came crushing on to hear the singing.

“ Yes.”

“ You are *certain*,” she advanced—  
“ certain of that ?”

“ Yes ; in half an hour supper will be ready ; I heard a servant tell lady Anne so.”

The mask made no reply; and Mr. Faulkner led her to a seat at the furthest end of the room, and seated himself by her, though without uttering a word.

## CHAPTER VI.

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AN indistinct remembrance of her voice, though she endeavoured to disguise it, made Mr. Faulkner determine not to lose sight of the mask near him: apprehending who she was, he touched upon many subjects which he judged would be interesting to her; but none seemed to affect her so much as the one relative to unmasking at supper.

“It seems,” said Mr. Faulkner, in a gay tone of voice, “you are apprehensive of some serious evil resulting from your shewing us your face; and perhaps it is only mercy which makes you thus fearful?”

"I wish," said the mask, in reply, "that I could get away before supper begins. I can't unmask; it would be cruel—ungenerous—unkind to do so."

"There!" answered Mr. Faulkner, laughing, "that is by no means an indefinite confirmation of what I have said. Why could it be ungenerous—unkind—cruel?"

"You are jesting," said the mask, lowering her voice; "*I* am serious. You must not talk to me on these things. Come, let us listen to that strange song, Death and Life; for it is so singular, it cannot fail to attract."

Lady Anne at that moment came up, and spoke to Mr. Faulkner: she was followed by a jockey, whose only merit consisted in a long whip, which ever and anon he cracked, to the confusion and dismay of the company.—"How admirably my niece supports her character!" said her ladyship to Mr. Faulkner; "really, she is the *Life* of us this evening. My Savoyards disappointed me; but, between

quadrilles and waltzes, and with my Juliet's aid, we have done very well. Notwithstanding all, however, I am tired to death."

"You are the lady who sung a touching air not long since?" said the jockey to the mysterious mask; and he seated himself by her side.

She bowed.

"You will perhaps favour us again?"

She bowed, and was going to rise; but the jockey *swore* she should either unveil her face, or sing.

"What shall it be?" she asked, in a voice of great agitation.

"Any thing you like—so it is but a song;" and, according to his request, she was going to begin, had not a scream of—"Oh, she is fainting! carry her into the air," made her desist from the attempt.

"Who's fainting?" said lady Anne, raising her glass, with the most careless air in the world.

"I don't know," answered the jockey, in the same compassionate tone; "some

one at the upper end of the room, I fancy."

"Just go and see, will you? One must go and make inquiries, in a minute or two," added lady Anne.

"Oh, it is only Juliet Amherste; she always faints now, you know, at large parties: she is dying by inches," said the jockey, returning.

"Oh! that's all," repeated her ladyship, smelling at her salts. "Upon my word, I shall faint myself soon."

"Oh no, wait till after supper. Come, my fair incognita, to hazard a miserable pun—no song, no supper."

"You will not unmask me then," said the female, "but will permit me to go, as I have another engagement to fulfil?"

"Pon my soul you shall go, whenever you like, if you will but sing! I adore singing," continued the jockey.

"I know you *did*."

"You know I *did*!" and the jockey's increased curiosity in the mask was for a moment suspended, by a messenger from

the further end of the room, 'fraught with the intelligence that Miss Amherste had REALLY fainted, and was very ill. They were going to take her home immediately, at her own request.

"What a catastrophe!" said her ladyship, who seemed to consider it any thing but a catastrophe; "these things disturb the arrangement of our balls more than a little. She will be quite well to-morrow; I am sure it is nothing more than a common fainting fit. But I must go;" and away she went.

"Now the song," said the jockey, taking the mask by the arm.

"You shall have it," answered the mask; "but, at the same time, remember your promise;" and with a slight inclination of the form, she leaned from the gaze, earnest gaze of her companions, and began—

"Oh, what would I give, could I reign in that heart!"

I said, when I first saw thy face;

But how soon did that sunbeam of pleasure depart,

When, beneath all that brightness of grace,

" I beheld thee all selfish and cold as the wind,
Which blasts—which destroys in an hour;
Nor leaves but a stalk as a remnant behind—
As the wreck of some beautiful flower !

" Oh, would thou hadst gather'd some less favour'd thing,
More suited to thee and to thine !
Oh, would thou hadst felt it no pleasure to wring
A heart, oh ! so tender as mine !

" Yet my lips cannot curse thee—I pity thy state ;
For guilt and foul shame must attend thee ;
And my bosom disdains to add grief to a fate,
Which sin in its agony sends thee !"

No comments passed upon the song, for, to an *unpenetrating* observer, lord Thomas Fashionist was tying a knot in the lash of his whip, and the mask settling her veil ; and, had not supper been announced, they might both have been in an embarrassed situation ; as it was, without testifying any compunction, he raised his hand to unveil and unmask the incognita.

" Remember your promise," said the mask.

" My promises are as nothing in such cases as these, and I **MUST** see your face."

"It is one," said the mask, drawing back, "which cannot fail to disturb you."

"This is all masquerade; I dare say you are very handsome, and only want to surprise me."

"*How is your child?*" said the mask, abruptly; and testifying more eagerness in the anticipation of his reply than she had yet done, he seized her by the arm, and led her once more to her seat.

"You ask me strange questions," he said, "and as if you knew something relative to the early part of my life. Who are you? How came you here? and why do you ask me these things? they distress me."

"You mistake—they cannot distress you; they cannot affect *you*. Oh no, you have there fallen into an error; you cannot feel, for you have no heart. But you have a child, which—but—I—I—wish to see again."

"Go on," said lord Thomas; "do not hesitate. You are sent from——"

"Yes," exclaimed the mask, anticipating his words, "I do indeed come from

one who formerly knew you, and knew you before you were the thing you now are. Did not the serpent bite you, after it had perished your better feelings, and by bitter falsehoods wounded your peace?"

"Unmask!" said lord Thomas, trembling in every limb—"I must see your face;" and he made a second attempt to take the cover from her face.

"Spare yourself—spare me!" said she, also trembling.

"Ah, that's right," said lady Anne's cousin, coming up, "unmask, for supper is ready: there, I have unfastened the spring behind.—Now, my lord, let us have a peep, for this lady has been more scrupulous than any one else."

A full ray of light streamed full upon the countenance of the lady, in whose pale and altered face lord Thomas, with considerable agony, beheld his *first wife, from whom he had been unjustly divorced!*

Both were silent, till at last, fearing further exposure, she beckoned him to the door, through which she intended to de-

part.—“Think not,” she said, “I had any motive relative to disturbing your peace, when I came here—it was weak, futile curiosity, which has its own punishment. Unjustly as I have been accused, to you, as the father of my child, which I shall see no more, I owe some love; and when I beheld you, gay, unheeding me or mine—when I saw all around you cheerful, and apparently filled with happiness—I felt indignant I, innocent, and wilfully accused, should be excluded from society in which I once reigned. I have a woman’s heart. I have only one wish—to see my child; and you, who are aware now how fatally I have been wronged, will not refuse me this last favour?”

“You forget,” said lord Thomas, at once appalled by the appearance of a woman so fatally wronged, “what troubles, what dissensions, may arise from my granting this favour: but the child is at school; you can see her, if you will—she is in — square. The sooner you leave this house the better.”

“ Inhospitable enough !” exclaimed a lazy domino, who was lingering in the anteroom, and heard his lordship’s words.

“ No matter,” said the lady, in a masquerade voice; “ I leave him to a fate even more cruel than my own—the bitter pangs of a tormenting conscience !”

“ Heavens and earth ! what a philippic !” said the lazy domino. “ I have an immense love for satire. Who are you ? Do let me see your face !”

“ Don’t talk of seeing faces !” exclaimed a mask, running along with a goblet of water ; “ there’s lady Anne Fashionist has fainted, though I heard her particularly requested not to do so till after supper. Every body is in commotion ; and no one knows how to act.”

“ Yes ; but I must see this lady’s face,” said the first mask.

“ Indeed but you will not,” exclaimed the other mask ; “ for you will oblige me by taking this goblet to lady Anne, whilst I hunt up lord Thomas ;” and whilst the two masks were battling it out to know

who should be cupbearer to lady Anne, the female mask disappeared; and lord Thomas, abandoning his jockey suit, appeared in the supper-room in plain clothes.

“ Dear me, what a long fainting fit of lady Anne’s!” he heard one lady say to another; “ but no wonder—only think of the impertinent creature daring to come! Lord Thomas’s first wife—a *divorcée* !”

“ Ah!” said another, “ how dare she present herself here?”

“ *Who* present herself? Pray let us into the secret, will you?” advanced a third; and the first speaker elucidated the mystery, by saying—“ That lord Thomas married a beautiful woman—was one of the tenderest, faithful (*i. e.* unkind and *un-faithful*) of husbands—allowed her every latitude of purse and extravagance, till at last she made a false step with a friend of his; at least, circumstantial evidence convicted her of the crime; and a divorce took place. Lord Thomas married again a lady of large fortune, and the thing was settled.”

The real state of the case was awfully different: lord Thomas married his first wife because she was the rage, and every one said she would be a prize: he was not at all sorry to part with her, because he was tired of her: that she had been imprudent, was admitted even by herself; but she was far from guilty; a friend, in whom she had placed considerable confidence, betrayed some letters, which certainly seemed to contain unequivocal expressions of guilt; the many appearances against her shaded the trial, and she was divorced. An alteration then she felt most sensibly in the eyes of the world: the divorcee became an object of coolness and contempt, more than of pity or commiseration; she felt the full infliction of crime, and yet did not merit it.

There is nothing so abhorrent to the feelings of human nature as the sight of an adulteress; and the crime itself is one of the most vile and detestable in the tablet—it creates distraction in families—severs the dear and social ties of domestic

life—disunites every bond of love, terminating with disgrace in this world, and a dark tremendous view in the world to come.

Lord Thomas had wounded her feelings by unkind treatment, and then mortified her by his infidelity: that, in some measure, to the eye of the world, might palliate her imprudence; but there is nothing, we aver, in any shape, can do away the magnitude of that crime.

Lady Anne Fashionist had just time to sit down in one of her most becoming attitudes, before she thought it necessary or proper to faint; when the tables were nearly full, it then became an indispensable duty to do so; there were some delightful beaux at hand to help, so, by sweet degrees, she fainted—succeeded, to her most sanguine wishes, in disturbing every one at the table at which she presided—and was carried out.

Lord Thomas heard she had fainted, but it was a thing so common, he did not find it had any peculiar effect upon him;

he therefore ate his supper very composedly, drank his claret as usual, and waltzed with the honourable Mrs. V—— after it.

The “ affair” of the *ci-devant* lady Fashionist’s making her appearance at the masquerade was a nine days’ wonder, and then it passed away, as if nothing of the kind had ever taken place. Lord Thomas was perfectly dumb on the subject; and lady Anne had just sense enough to hold her peace. The story was exaggerated, diminished, glossed over, or added to, just as suited the convenience or disposition of the speaker; and at last, had lord Thomas heard it, he would have been at a loss to disseminate the truth of the report from the falsehood.

“ Pon my soul, I hear that pretty girl, Juliet Amherste, is dying! Is it true?” said a gentleman to lord Thomas; “ for I fancy you *must* know.”

“ Ask my wife; she sent this morning,” said lord Thomas; “ but I don’t know what answer came; or, if you have no

better engagement, come with me to Tattersall's."

"Ah, I don't care if I do," said the gentleman, and off they went: before, however, they reached Tattersall's, another of the masquerade party came up, saying—"Fashionist, here, I want three words with you. I fancy I am on the wrong side of a hundred guineas. Is Miss Amherste dead? I betted on her life."

"How should I know? Ask my wife," exclaimed his lordship again, "for she sent this morning. If you betted she would live, I fancy you *are* gone."

"I betted she would live a fortnight," said the gentleman.

"Did you? Farewell to your hundred then! Come, join us to Tattersall's; you understand horses, and I run three at Newmarket, Epsom, and Swanton races. My devil of a groom, the other day, made a desperate——"

"You can't tell me then if Miss Amherste be alive?" interrupted the speaker:

"I told; to come along. I shall hear she is gone time enough."

A few paces further brought them full upon Mr. Faulkner, on a very fine horse; and lord Thomas stopped to observe him.

Mr. Faulkner stopped also, and in a tone of inquiry, very different from the idle better, and the mere man of curiosity, he asked, how Miss Amberate was, and mentioned his hopes that she was better.

"My wife sent this morning; you must ask her," said lord Thomas. "Faulkner, where did you get that fine horse? Never saw a creature better put together in my life."

Mr. Faulkner gave the history, and rode immediately to lady Anne's house.

Her ladyship was predetermined not to be "at home," but hearing it was Mr. Faulkner, she changed her mind, and admitted him. He found her in her *bed-chamber*, making antique jars, apparently with the utmost unconcern; and her first question was—"Are you for the Crawleys to-night? All the world is to be there;"

and on his replying in the negative, she begged to know what unfortunate circumstance prevented him?

"Nothing but my own will," he said.

"Your own will!" and she was proceeding to laugh at him; for refusing an invitation to the Crawleys, of all people in the world, when he touched upon the illness of Miss Amherste. "Ah, she's very ill; all has been done that could be done; and if she would keep her spirits up—but that she won't do—she might be better. I suppose it is now a confirmed decline; for the physicians shake their heads; and my sister says, *I dragged Juliet to my masquerade ball, and killed her. I went, it is true, and insisted on her coming, but it was all for her own amusement and good.*"

Mr. Faulkner had some doubts as to the motives which had prompted lady Anne to be so strenuous in wishing her niece to be of the party; he heard indeed, what was no more than the truth, that lady Anne went up to the sofa, on which

Miss Amherste lay, and declared, in very angry terms—"She would never forgive her, if she disappointed her;" that Miss Amherste pleaded illness as an excuse, which her ladyship refused to admit; and that at last she said, in a tone which Miss Amherste knew was peremptory—"If you refuse to come this time, I will never put you to the test again!"

She arose, dressed herself in the habiliments of Life, with every appearance of illness in her countenance and feelings; and, to please lady Anne, might have, in all probability, hastened her dissolution.

"Pray do you know," said lady Anne, "a Miss Wycherly—Beatrice Wycherly? Juliet has had a letter from her, quite unexpected, I fancy, and she is so pleased; the only thing that has given her REAL pleasure since she was ill."

"INDREED!" said Mr. Faulkner, with a momentary revulsion of feeling he could not control.

"Yes. Pray is it the Miss Wycherly whom the Coxes are intimate with—the

one who writes? Why does not she come to town? Who are the Wycherlys? any body's? Oh! by the bye, have you seen Maturin's last? or don't you look into a book, except to fall asleep over it, as Fashionist does? Fashionist was thirty-eight yesterday. Of course he is gone to take soda-water with some of his chums."

"Pray," said Mr. Faulkner, with considerable feeling and steadiness, "do you apprehend Miss Amherste *really* to be in danger?"

"Yes. Though I don't know either; she is better one day, and worse the next. Somebody here, the other day, betted on her life."

"And Beatrice has written to her," advanced Mr. Faulkner, "has she not?"

"Oh! you know this Miss Wycherly, I see!—Yes; a folio: positively, I never saw such a letter. You were not named in it, I believe," she added, smiling.

"Oh no, I did not imagine such an honour," he replied, with some pain; and he relapsed into silence, which was broken

by lady Anne's saying—"Pray do you call on the Beresfords to-day?"

"Yes. I can take some message for your ladyship, perhaps?"

"You can. There is a sweet, pretty, little, dear, Venetian cabinet, which is to be raffled for; just tell Mrs. Beresford, will you, I want to see her—she will know the rest. Come this way, and I will shew you a model of it;" and opening a door, he went into a small room, which, till then, he had never been in. Some unfinished drawings, and some letters in the same state, lay on the table, which her ladyship assured him were Juliet's work.

"The last she will, in all probability, ever attempt," thought Mr. Faulkner, as he took one of the landscapes up; and the idea the frail being whose hand had traced the lines, would trace no more, flashed more than once across his mind.

"All those beginnings of letters are to that Miss Wycherly," said her ladyship. "Juliet could not produce one to her mind. Look here—'Dear madam'—"

‘dear Miss Wycherly’—‘dearest friend!’ Really, how absurd it seemed! and those drawings——What you wish for one perhaps? but you had better have one that is finished.”

Mr. Faulkner had rather have one of those than any other, he said; and lady Anne indulged his “whim,” as she called it, shewed him the model of the Venetian cabinet, and then let him go.

Lady Amherste’s garden was immediately beneath Mr. Beresford’s windows; and Mr. Faulkner, after some moments spent in conversation with Mr. Beresford, drew his chair to the window, under the impression of seeing Miss Amherste, possibly taking the air. He regarded lady Amherste’s house with close attention, and at last, by the curtains of one window being let down, he apprehended that was the apartment inhabited by the invalid.

He would have given a great deal to have had a few moments conversation with her: independent of the interest excited by hearing she had had a letter from

Beatrice, he felt a painful share of curiosity respecting her situation. All he discovered, was an unusual gloom in lady Amherste's house; no harp—no voice—no singing—no dancing—no company; and he made the remark to one of the Miss Beresfords, who chanced to be near him at the time his ideas fell upon the subject.

“ Every thing in the house has been unusually still to-day,” said Miss Beresford; “ we therefore apprehend Miss Amherste is worse. There has been a difference between our families, therefore we do not speak.—But surely there is some person at Miss Amherste's window. I am near sighted, and cannot distinguish who it is.”

“ It is *she* !” exclaimed Mr. Faulkner, getting quickly up from his seat. “ I wonder whether she can see us;” and another minute convinced him she could. She was supported on one side by her mother; on the other by a young lady: she was sadly changed—strangely altered; and a

hair's breadth alone seemed between her and death.

"I *will* bow," said Mr. Faulkner; and as he did so, Miss Beresford saw his countenance change; but more so, when she saw Miss Amherste return it, by kissing her hands, and then clasping them together, as much as to say—"I shall never see you again. Farewell!" They led her from the place, and the curtain was let fall; and Miss Beresford observed for some moments his eyes were fixed upon the vacant window, with an expression which it melted her to see.

He felt that curtain had parted them for ever; and as he returned home, he left the little drawing she had done, at a shop, desiring it to be glazed and framed, as well as it was possible to be done. In the evening he sent his servant to lady Amherste's to hear how her daughter was; she was then, he heard, comfortably asleep; the next day he went himself, and found she was destined to awake from that *sleep no more!*

CHAPTER VII.

LADY Anne Fashionist was just sitting down to breakfast, at half-past three, p. m. when a note came from lady Amherste, to request her immediate presence, *her daughter having just expired!*

We will spare the reader the mutual reproaches which passed when they met; we will not likewise linger on the pomp which followed the poor young creature to the grave; and that proved another source of serious disquiet to lady Amherste, when, on looking into her daughter's desk, a few days after the funeral, on a small slip of paper she found the following words:—"Dear mother, let my funeral be private;" and on a small parcel was affixed another slip of paper, containing a request that it might be forwarded to Beatrice Wycherly. On the opening of

that parcel, it was found to contain her gold watch and trinkets, with a letter, short and imperfectly written; but the most correct epistle could not have been valued with more care than was that scrawl by her who received it.

Lady Amherste, bereft of her child, and lady Amherste, with a beautiful daughter, the envy and admiration of the world (*haut ton*), were two very different beings. In the character of a mother, she had undoubtedly been neglectful, yet watchful; she had been careful of the future establishment her daughter might make—careful of her accomplishments and beauty; but had entirely laid aside all thoughts of improving her principles and mind. She tried to think she had done her duty, by engaging mademoiselle to superintend the education of Juliet; but at the same time she felt the words of the lady who had refused to give mademoiselle a character as a considerable drawback on the thought: they were—*Mademoiselle can superintend the superficial part of education in*

your daughter, lady Amherste; but as to principles, religious and moral, why she is there dreadfully deficient."

"Principles, religious and moral!" lady Amherste had not given them a thought. Mademoiselle played the harp, knew languages, could draw, sing, was a waltzer, an elocutionist, made a graceful courtesy, and finally, was perfectly competent to complete an education but indifferently began, as to *les graces*; further than them she knew nothing.

When the dying film was gradually dimming the eyes of Juliet Amherste, and there was none at hand to help to cheer—to compose a soul quivering into eternity, she desired Beatrice's letter to be read to her, even more than once: the contents were soothing to the distempered mind, and with healing power seemed to smooth the dark vista of the tomb.—"If I had been like *her*," she constantly repeated, "I should not fear to die."

"To die!" said lady Amherste—"you are not dying, Juliet. By the bye, you

must get well, for the Mordants are thinking about a ball, and you must go!"

"I must go," said the faded girl, "where no one will accompany me; and you, dear mother, if you could spare time sometimes for prayer (forgive my words), you will die happier when the time—the awful time arrives. Oh, what would I give to go back—to recall a few years of my short life!—but that is impossible."

"You think too seriously of these things," said lady Anne Fashionist; "you are a suicide with sombre thoughts, and must be cured of them, by balls, operas, and plays, instead of medicines, which, I am convinced, do you no good. You shall go with me to Cantley; and we will have fishing-rods, and be the same gay beings we were last summer.—Pray, lady Anherste, who is this Beatrice Wycherly Juliet is so fond of?" added lady Anne, in a low tone of voice.

"An odd, strange, dull, incomprehensible girl," said her ladyship: "I wonder Juliet should ever fancy her."

“ Pray, my dear niece,” said lady Anne, with a slight elevation of voice, “ do you know ‘ *le Garçon Volage* ?’ you must learn it when you get better. Anastatia Rayner sings it sweetly : she really promises to *take* this next winter. Who would have thought *she* could ever be at all tolerable ? Oh ! that vile brother of hers——But hark ! what is that——your repeater ? It is high time I took my departure ; for the Crawleys’ ball is to-night. Oh, how I do despise these things ! Farewell, *ma petite—au revoir !*”

“ Will she leave me thus,” thought Miss Amherste, “ when I feel I am near death ? and is it so imperceptible to all about me ?——Dear aunt,” and she spoke in low broken accents, “ do not I *look* ill ? Take my hand ; for if we should never meet again——” and bitter tears spoke the rest.

“ If we should never meet again ! Now really, Juliet,” said lady Anne, forcing a smile, “ that is so odd, when you are only ill from fatigue and exhaustion. My dear

girl, you give yourself the horrors, and me the vapours. I must rouge deep to-night."

"When people die, they feel an oppression here, don't they?" said Miss Amherste, putting her hands on her chest.

"No; oh no! and dying people never look like you. But come, I have half an hour left for you yet. You see what an indulgent aunt I am."

A thundering rap at the door roused lady Anne from a momentary reverie; and protesting she was "not fit to be seen," being *en déshabillé*, she hurried into her carriage—hurried on her clothes when she arrived at home—and then dashed off to the Crawleys.

On her way from the ball, she ordered some of "her people" to ask at lady Amherste's how Miss Amherste was. She was not perfectly satisfied with the account she received; she therefore, as her sister was up, just hastened to the invalid's room, saw a fine colour mantling in the cheek, which till then had been so deathly

pale, and the thin figure resting in composed sleep.—“She will live yet,” were the last words she addressed to lady Amherste; and what is so delusive as hope, more especially to those who argue as they wish? Lady Amherste next day found how fatally she had deceived herself—for Juliet woke no more.

It was on the morning of Miss Amherste's funeral, Mr. Faulkner, partly to avoid seeing, or being seen, hurried away from the street through which it was passing, when Miss Beresford met him.—“So,” said she, “there go the last remains of that beautiful girl. They bury her at Ashford, I hear.”

Mr. Faulkner kept his eyes obstinately bent from the pomp, the mutes, the mourning coaches, and the HEARSE; and, without perceiving Miss Beresford's attempts at displaying her rich hair, in lovely ringlets, he endeavoured to make his escape.

But Miss Beresford, whose vanity swallowed up her good sense, could not help remarking how “serious he looked,” when

every body was on the *tapis* for the honourable Mr. C——'s *déjeûné*.

"I do not make one at it," he replied.

"But your sister will?"

"Oh no;" and the dry manner in which he spoke made Miss Beresford rather sharply say—"But you *promised* to go; and promises from one who is reputed so sincere, ought not to be broken."

"I never promised; and if I had, altogether I do not think I should have held them sacred; for my sister was married this morning, to an old beau of yours; and the day of Mr. C——'s *déjeûné* is the one on which I promised to meet the new married pair at Cheam."

"An old beau of mine! Who pray?" and with the most unconscious air in the world, Mr. Faulkner replied—"Colonel Harvey, of the Guards."

The very man Miss Beresford, to use polite slang, "had been trying for four years." Contending emotions appeared in her face and manners; various things rose up in judgment against her; and,

with a cool voice, she wished them *very* happy.

Mr. Faulkner walked on; and Miss Beresford could only do the same, wondering, at the same time, how colonel Harvey could marry a woman whose hair was inclinable to be auburn—(that was, in Miss Beresford's imagination, *red*)—how often had she heard him express his dislike of it—and particularly of tall women! Miss Faulkner was tall, and had auburn hair; what could he see in her? She was not a good temper, for she once——But no matter, she was married—to the very man too who had frequently ridiculed her person, and laughed at her manners; and Miss Beresford had every reason to imagine a *dead set* at Mr. Faulkner would be of no avail: the man's heart was stone—flint stone; nay, worse, for that *was* porous. Not an opinion did he express, but she agreed in it—not a flower, a face, a picture, did he approve, but she admired also; what he liked she liked; but all would not do—the heart remained

untouched, and firm as a rock, which the waves, the storms, the tempests of the siege, did not for a moment disturb.

Mr. Faulkner intended leaving town early in the spring; for, independent of a natural love for the country, there were some alterations he had in contemplation at the Lodge; and he by no means was settled in his mind; for though the storms of love, after their vigour is past, may be supposed to leave the heart at rest, he found, though Beatrice had rejected *him*, he could not easily forget *her*. It is true, the keenness of the disappointment had passed by, but there yet remained too dangerous a sort of preference for him to venture into her presence. He made up his mind to visit the Wycherlys no more than common courtesy might need; and he thought even in his calls she might not be present; she was so much engaged always, and had no time for superfluous politeness. He had always found her employed—usefully if not altogether in promoting accomplishments alone; and

he knew, if once she thought it gave him a moment's uneasiness to see her, she would not even put him to the test.

He was actually, in his imagination, framing the first call at Brundale, fancying the presence of countenance in Mrs. Wycherly, and the sweet softness of Susan, added to the frank, sincere, solid manners of Beatrice; he was, in imagination, forming what he should say, when lady Amherste's own footman interrupted his reverie, by a message to the purport—"That his lady wished to see Mr. Faulkner immediately."

"I am sorry I am *particularly* engaged," said Mr. Faulkner, stopping.

"Lady Amherste wished to see him *particularly*," the man said again.

Mr. Faulkner would be with lady Amherste in an hour, he replied, and he hurried to his bookseller's, where he had promised to meet a friend, determined to be with her as quickly as possible; but what was his dismay, in once again encountering the incorrigible Miss Beresford!

"Oh! pray help me to select some books," she said, holding him a catalogue: "I can depend on *your* judgment. I want some for a present, and I have no discretion that way."

"Nor any other way," Mr. Faulkner thought; but he was content to run his eye over the list she held him, *pour passer le tems*, till his friend should come; Miss Beresford, at the same time, holding her glass, to see whose equipage it was stopping at the door.

"Lady Amherste's, positively!"

"Yes, ma'am, her ladyship is calling for some books," said one of the young men who was attending in the shop; "she chose some yesterday; and the young lady with her too."

"Some companion," thought and said Miss Beresford to Mr. Faulkner, as she directed his attention to a female, in deep mourning, and at the same moment looked inquisitively through her glass. "Some dependent, undoubtedly; just the figure, the manners of a humble friend."

The young lady was then some way in the shop, and so intently engaged in giving directions concerning some books of lady Amherste's, that she did not heed either Mr. Faulkner or his companion.

The gentleness of the voice, with the thinness of the figure, commanded respect, for it was evidently not the cringing servility of a humble friend—it was rather the effects of a sympathizing mind; and Mr. Faulkner moved away from the young lady, because he feared Miss Beresford's remarks might be heard.

“We will certainly have them done, ma'am,” said the bookseller, in reply to what the young lady had said. “These are for yourself—may I inquire your name, ma'am?”

“Oh yes,” and the young lady gave it, but in so low a tone, Miss Beresford, who was dying to know it, promised to give up the ghost, for she found it was impossible to discover it.

“At lady Amherste's, ma'am?” said the bookseller again.

"Yes. Have the goodness to send them as early as possible—we leave town the day after to-morrow;" and, turning away from the counter, she was leaving the shop.

"*We* leave town! Oh! I am sure she is some humble friend," said Miss Beresford.

"If she is, I pity her," thought Mr. Faulkner; "for, to a feeling mind, a sense of dependence is indeed distressing."

"Here is a beautiful book of botanical flowers!" exclaimed Miss Beresford; "do look at these lovely engravings, you who are so fond of flowers too." She added, lowering her tone, "That Miss, whoever she is, is not at all pretty. You need not peep under the dark veil—it hides nothing worth seeing;" and, for the first time in her life, she saw Mr. Faulkner turn upon her a look of displeasure.

"There was a copy," he said, "which I used to write at school, and for which I remember I was once severely flogged—perhaps that not a little tended to deepen

it in my remembrance—yet it is so, just I must repeat it—‘Beauty is but skin deep;’ and if either Miss Beresford or myself were disposed to be sentimental, we might add—

‘Trust not to beauty, though ’tis fair—
Trust not the graceful winning air;
But heed that brilliance of the mind,
Which Wisdom can but love to find.”

“Those are excellent lines,” said Miss Beresford, under a momentary confusion; “your own, I suppose?”

“My own! oh, no,” and Mr. Faulkner hastened forwards, to pick up a catalogue, which the young lady in mourning had let fall: in doing so, their faces, of course, became opposite each other’s; and, to his infinite surprise, he beheld BEATRICE WYCHERLY!

“How will *he* meet me?” thought Beatrice, turning pale.

“How will *she* meet *me*?” was likewise the subject of Mr. Faulkner’s imagination: but he had scarcely time for this idea, when she presented him her hand;

which he was not displeased to find trembled in his.

Miss Beresford crushed forward to be introduced; but Mr. Faulkner was so engaged in conversation with Beatrice, he had almost forgotten such a being was in existence: he was leading her back to Brundale—to the inhabitants—to Susan—to her brother; and so much had the meeting between them taken up his thoughts, he was on the eve of asking for one of whom Beatrice *could* give no information—one of whom her starting tears warned him not to inquire—Anne, now no longer in this world.

A pause ensued, for Mr. Faulkner had not the heart to begin a different theme; whilst Beatrice was endeavouring to struggle against the recollection of what had passed since they met; and he was deaf to all Miss Beresford's entreaties of (assisted by a touch on the arm)—“Pray introduce me. Who is it? Some friend of yours, I see—*do* introduce me.”

He shook his head, as much as to say,

“Do not ask me;” and then led Beatrice to the carriage door.

“Who is that lady?” said Miss Beresford, on his return. “If she were not a friend of yours, I should say she was immensely plain—lady Amherste’s companion, is not she?”

“Lady Amherste’s *friend*,” he replied; “one of poor Miss Amherste’s *sincere* friends also.”

“Oh! pray is it that Miss Wycherly?” said Miss Beresford, superciliously.

“It is,” he answered.

“Oh! you might have introduced me; one likes to know people of talent; and when I said she was plain (for no woman can be pretty with a turned-up nose), I was going to remark she had something sensible and interesting in her countenance; the one who writes. What a pity you did not introduce me! They are people without fortune, I believe?”

“Yes—entirely so.”

“Any of them pretty?”

"One beautiful. This Beatrice is *the plainest of the family*," he advanced.

"And the beautiful one?"

"Is not so clever, or so sensible as this. They are a worthy family, and a family I much admire."

"Oh ho!" said Miss Beresford, laughing, "*votre tres humble serviteur*."

Mr. Faulkner's steady manners did not permit much raillery on that subject; and Miss Beresford found, or rather thought she found, there was no danger in the Wycherlys. He had said one was beautiful—but at the same time acknowledged she was not so sensible, or so clever as Beatrice; and as for her, she had no fear in that quarter; she was too plain—had no style—nothing in her manners to attract.

As for the solid qualities of the mind and heart, they were things she did not attend to: but Mr. Faulkner was of a different persuasion; he was not dazzled by a bravura, or a fine harp lesson, played with white hands; nor did he yield to the charms of any woman, till he thought the

mind was cultivated and pure: Miss Amherste had made him fatally wise and prudently cautious—for, once deceived, a man looks at the ice before he trusts it again; and Mr. Faulkner felt it had been a lesson of experience and sorrow, which he knew he should never forget.

“ Oh, this is the *learned* Miss Wycherly, then !” said Miss Beresford, with an expression which at once divined her sentiments in a moment to her companion. “ A blue stocking, I suppose. Oh ! I am half glad you did *not* introduce me ; I should have been half afraid to open my lips before her.”

“ You need not have feared her ; like all those who appreciate knowledge, she is only the more humble—but Miss Beresford is laughing, or disposed to laugh.”

“ Oh no ! ’pon my word—quite serious, really,” said she.

“ I was only going to observe, like all those whose information is solid, and duly appreciated, she does not consider those

who do not know so much as herself as objects of contempt—far from it.”

“ Oh no, of course,” said Miss Beresford.

“ She once told me, knowledge made her humble; and I thought, at the time, the idea both religious and proper; and yet I am sure she did not aspire to more than others. I mistake—she *might* aspire to more than other women; but she was not conscious of being better informed than those by whom she was surrounded.—‘ I have written a little tale,’ she said to me, ‘ and the world is pleased’ to shew it some favour; but that cannot make me vain. If I have had a talent given me, I should be wrong not to employ it. But I know not there is any peculiar genius required in the arrangement of a few fictitious characters.”

“ All this, I suppose, with the falling-back diffidence of a young authoress; really it must have interested you,” said Miss Beresford, looking through her glass.

“ It more than interested me,” he re-

marked, not at all disposed to say the less, because his companion was so heartless; "I admired the rough girl in her own native frankness—her generous turn of feeling—her independence of spirit, more than I choose to say."

Miss Beresford looked piqued; and consulting Mr. Faulkner's countenance, she perceived it was not *assumed* pleasure which darted into it when he spoke of the merits of Beatrice; he had forgotten, in his zealous vindication of her character, from being denominated a LEARNED LADY, he was speaking to one who let not a word pass by unheeded—who could not altogether imagine *why* Mr. Faulkner took so much pains to even converse of a girl whom nobody knew—who had no grand connexions—no fortune—and, what was still more unattainable, no beauty.

* * * * *

Mr. Faulkner, once more established at the Lodge, found it an indubitable necessity to call at the Hall. He was averse from this, from more motives than one—

the extreme power he found Beatrice still possessed over his heart and affections, and the manœuvring of Mrs. Wycherly to place him by Susan, caused him at once to recoil from the trial. He even found it necessary to call on the blind Mrs. Henniker before he ventured to turn his horse's head towards the broad road leading to the Hall; but there again he found himself touched almost as much as the visit to Brundale could have touched him: the little parlour in which he sat was hung round with small sketches, neither brilliantly done nor elegantly finished, but, like the person who did them, correct, warm, and forcible prototypes of nature. There were books also, some of the newest and best, on the blank leaves of which there was inscribed the name—"Beatrice Wycherly;" and one, as if recently perused, lay upon the table, with one of the leaves folded down. He was tempted, by the absence of Mrs. Henniker, to look more earnestly into the volumes. Pencil marks, and several lines written also in

one book, peculiarly drew his attention—it was “*Horæ Mosaicæ*,” but the hand was not Beatrice’s, nor did the book belong to her; he found himself, after that discovery, laying aside the volume, as one not so interesting to him as the others which bore her name. After the entrance of Mrs. Henniker, whom he found much debilitated from illness and a weak state of health, he was obliged to listen to the history of her long indisposition, in which she declared she might have died, had it not been for the kind, daughter-like attention and affection of BEATRICE WYCHERLY.

Mr. Faulkner did not at the moment remember Mrs. Henniker was deprived of the use of sight, else he would not have felt so mortally confused, nor made use of the subterfuge of getting up to look out of the window, when he might have remained quietly in his chair.

“These are her drawings, Mr. Faulkner, all round the room,” said Mrs. Henniker, “and, I dare say, some of her books; for

she will come and read to me, though she has been so ill herself. She worked me a footstool too; and though I cannot ever see it, I know it is pretty. Pray is not your house among the sketches? she told me the subject of them all once."

Yes, Mr. Faulkner saw the Lodge; and as he was regarding it most attentively, Mrs. Henniker asked him to lead her to her small garden.—"I am sure," said she, as she smelt the perfume of the grateful flowers, "*you* must like this, for *you* can see, Mr. Faulkner; and this was all Beatrice's contriving—she brought the seeds and sowed them, and ties up the flowers; come, gather one, because they are *her* planting. I expect her every minute, and then you will see how thin she is, and may tell her how good she is. I wish I could see her really happy!"

"Is she *not* happy?" inquired Mr. Faulkner; and his tone was so eager, Mrs. Henniker smiled.

"No, my dear sir—something preys on

her mind, and has done so for some time; but what it is, she conceals."

"LOVE, perhaps," said Mr. Faulkner, and his ideas glanced at Mr. Coxe.

"Oh, no, no, no—something much more serious than love."

Mr. Faulkner, for his part, thought the pangs of love quite serious enough.

"Something she hides from me; and I judge I am trusted with a great share of her confidence *too*," added Mrs. Henniker.

"Miss Wycherly is come, ma'am," said Mrs. Henniker's servant, coming down the garden.

"Well, I am very glad; let me take your arm.—Mr. Faulkner, do come in—and do not say good morning just yet."

Mr. Faulkner, however, would have *banged* off that moment, had he not been obliged, in a manner, to conduct Mrs. Henniker to the door of the parlour; and as he was doing so, he found time to say—"Permit me to wait in this little vestibule till Miss Wycherly is gone."

He spoke with an air Mrs. Henniker

did not wish to contend with, and one which seemed to say—"You must not entreat me so to do." Forgetting again she was blind, he bowed, and left her: determining to amuse himself in the vestibule, he took up a small gardening book, and tried to engage himself in the mystery of "planting," "cutting," "pruning," and "engrafting;" but he found that his attention was distracted by the voices in the next room: he would have given the world to have been able to escape over the wall at the bottom of the little garden; but it was seven feet high, and edged on the top with large iron spikes, with which he did not desire to form any acquaintance.

CHAPTER VIII.

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MR. Faulkner, though he wished to avoid meeting Beatrice, could not refrain from taking a look through the glass door, the

curtain of which was in one part drawn aside: he saw that she was much changed in face and form, even since he had seen her in town; but yet the whole style of her countenance was the same; it expressed integrity, and, at the moment *he* looked, virtue and humanity. She was reading something which appeared to command all her feelings of interest, and the open ingenuousness of her manners, attracted him nearer to the door; one of her hands was on Mrs. Henniker's, the other was employed in holding the volume.—“I wish,” said she, after she had concluded what she wished to peruse, “that I could find my gardening book; I am nearly certain I left it in the vestibule; will you excuse me, and I will look for it?”

“No; I shall not excuse you,” said Mrs. Henniker, keeping fast hold of her hand.

“You will let me get away, I know,” said Beatrice, laughing and struggling, “when I tell you, a carriage is at the

door; and I do really think it is the Coxes—and this room is so terribly littered.”

“The Coxes!” said Mrs. Henniker, relinquishing her grasp, and in the turmoil of having the room in proper order, half-forgetting Mr. Faulkner.

“Yes, it is their livery; and they are getting out.”

“Ring, my love, and tell Anne to clear away,” said Mrs. Henniker.

“There is Mr. Coxe, I declare,” said Beatrice (and Mr. Faulkner imagined he saw a flush of pleasure on her cheek): “where shall I put all these frightful drawings I was going to nail up—and the old paper case—and this box of nails—and the hammers, where shall I put them?”

“In the closet,” said Mrs. Henniker, with great forecast.

“The closet door is locked! Where is the key?”

“Up stairs,” said Mrs. Henniker. “But the *small* closet,” advanced Mrs. Henniker, in immense peril.

"The box will not go into it—it is too broad. I can put them into the vestibule in a moment."

"ANY WHERE, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Henniker, as the feet of her visitants were drawing close to the door; and Beatrice, loaded with the box of nails—the hammers—the drawings, burst into the little room, where, in desolate majesty, sat—Mr. Faulkner.

Mr. Faulkner!—and Beatrice turned pale, then red, and at last was returning to the parlour, had not Mr. Faulkner's extended hand prevented her.—"Do not go," he said; "but tell me how you left lady Amherste?"

"Much better in spirits than could have been expected," she replied.

"I am glad of it. But I fear you exert yourself too much for the sake of others, and injure your own health."

"*I!* Oh no—I am quite well. You think, because I am thinner, perhaps,—— But I assure you *that*——In fact, I am *not* ill—I am only paler than usual."



Mrs. Henniker, with Miss Coxe, appearing at the door, terminated the converse between Mr. Faulkner and Beatrice; and the former, with an apology, mounted his horse for Brundale. But during the short ride, he had abundant time to discern and cogitate on the meeting between Beatrice and himself; and the next time he saw Mrs. Henniker, he received a reproof, in a good-humoured way, for running from Mr. Coxe, who wished to see him so very much, if it were only to congratulate him.

"On what?" asked Mr. Faulkner, in some dismay.

"Your approaching marriage."

"With whom, may I ask?"

"Oh! I cannot tell. But Beatrice told me of it some time since; and Miss Amherste told her.—Surely the name was St. John."

"Indeed!" replied Mr. Faulkner, in some pain; for he could well account for the reserve testified by Beatrice when they met.

“ Yes. Pray is she pretty—or half as good as Beatrice?”

“ Let me assure you, I am not even engaged; and when I am, I only hope it will be to one ‘*half* as good as Beatrice.’ Indeed, it is the first wish of my heart, it might be herself. She is the woman, of all others, who would make me happy.” The confession was made, and could not be recalled.

In another day Beatrice knew this. She received the intelligence with surprise, *but no delight*; and as Mrs. Henniker seemed to enlarge on the good resulting from so happy a match, she found it only increased Beatrice’s distress.—“ And what do you think?” added Mrs. Henniker. “ I have asked Mr. Faulkner to tea this afternoon; and I asked you also, purposely to meet him: I mean you to have all your conversation to yourselves.—And now, my dear girl, I am sure you must think of Mr. Faulkner as I do?”

Beatrice’s falling tears alone made any reply; but suddenly commanding her

feelings and voice, she said—she trusted Mrs. Henniker would do her the favour of giving Mr. Faulkner a note, which she would immediately write; it would spare her much pain—and that she knew Mrs. Henniker's feelings towards her were such as would prompt her to spare her all the misery she could.

“Pain!—misery! She meant then to *refuse* Mr. Faulkner! Oh! why would she not consider?—why would she not weigh all his merits?—why, in such haste, refuse the suit of a man who passionately loved her?”

“All this I know; but Mr. Faulkner has been once refused. I might not be steady and calm in that refusal. I fear my manners have betrayed that which I meant no one ever to discover. Oh! miserable girl that I am!”

“Miserable girl that you are!” said Mrs. Henniker; “why so wretched, my love? Is it that you fear giving pain?—is it that you love another?—or why? *Do* tell me. But what will your mother

say, when she knows you have refused Mr. Faulkner?"

"My mother! She knows then—you have told her Mr. Faulkner's sentiments?"

"I have, in the joy of my heart; for, Beatrice, dear girl, I *did* imagine you once preferred Mr. Faulkner—I *did* think he was formed to make you happy," said Mrs. Henniker; "and the prospect of an union with him, was so desirable every way—in congeniality of mind—in fortune—in EVERY prospect of happiness."

"Mr. Faulkner could not be happy with me, if he knew——Indeed I have heard him say," exclaimed Beatrice——

"But here he comes. What shall I do? I am almost distracted;" and her agitation was so great, that she was scarcely conscious she was betraying the sentiments she wished to conceal, by that very emotion she was then evincing.

"Can you love him?" asked Mrs. Henniker, as the garden gate fell to.

"CAN I LOVE HIM!" and Mrs. Henniker thought the manner in which her

young friend spoke, told her that she should only wonder if she did not.

But another moment, and Mr. Faulkner would have been in, and seen the tearful eyes and agitated manners of Beatrice, had she not rushed into the little vestibule, and prevented him. She there, to her infinite surprise, saw her mother.

"Ah, I dare say I frightened you," said she; "but I walked down here by the green path, and Mrs. Henniker told me all. Really, I think it will be a very good thing: and only think, Beatrice, he should choose you out of all—you, who cannot boast of any beauty! Mrs. Henniker says Mr. Faulkner talked to her a great deal concerning you; and Mrs. Henniker, I know, has said every thing she could in your favour."

"I am very much obliged to her," said Beatrice, in a powerless voice; "at the same time I hope her partiality has not made her think better of me than I deserve. But I hope you will not judge harshly of me, dear mother, nor think me

wrong, but I cannot marry Mr. Faulkner—I really cannot accept him.”

Mrs. Wycherly, at once astonished and dismayed, sat still upon her chair, and could at first use no other exclamation than that of—“ Cannot marry him ! cannot accept him ! ”

“ No, dear mother, I CANNOT. I must not deceive—I mean I will not deceive him, which I must do, if I accepted him ; ” and the workings of her mind appeared both in her countenance and manner ; something she dared not, could not reveal, seemed just ready to escape the quivering lips of the unhappy girl.

“ You are mad, or something worse than mad—idly blind—foolishly attached to some one else ! ” said Mrs. Wycherly, steadily. “ If you allowed yourself time to reason, to reflect on the grand match this might be, and if you remembered the happiness it would give your father and me, to see *you* well settled, you would surely try to love Mr. Faulkner. There is yet another thing I would have you re-

member—the very, very small fortune you must inherit: besides, you know how much the family estate is even now encumbered. Here a gentleman of sense, fortune, good family, makes you an offer—it must proceed only from disinterested love—and you are simple enough to hesitate.” She stopped, for the distracted air of Beatrice, and the absence of mind she seemed to endure, raised her curiosity.—“Satisfy me on one head,” she exclaimed, after a slight pause; “do you love any one else?”

“No,” said Beatrice, with conscious integrity; “no, mother, I do not.”

“No! well then, what for a moment can make you hesitate?”

“Dear mother, when we consider the immense importance of being open, candid, and sincere with a man you mean to marry; when we consider there ought to be no secrets, nothing which we cannot impart with readiness and confidence; and I, who am so strangely circumstanced—forgive me, but there is nothing I will not

do, if you will look over my refusal of a man I esteem too highly to deceive."

"To deceive! I can't divine what you mean. Do you not love Mr. Faulkner then?"

"I dare not love him; I have subdued myself *not* to think of him," said Beatrice, unguardedly.

"Then, for the future, do subdue yourself to think *of* him, and make up your mind to be happy with him; and let not me and your father be distressed by the idea you have thrown good fortune wantonly away. My dear, DEAR Beatrice, do think of this."

Beatrice was ready to throw herself into her mother's arms; and for a moment the tears, which might never have flowed, but for this unexpected kindness, fell fast down her cheeks.

"Take a week to consider of it," said Mrs. Wycherly; "and let Mr. Faulkner then meet with what he wishes—your leave to address you; and, when time permits me, I will talk to you more. You



must see Mr. Faulkner this evening: tell him you have not made up your mind—that it requires time to consider on such a momentous thing, &c., and all will be well again; and Sawbridge will be so pleased; and your father so delighted; and Susan so charmed.”

Mrs. Wycherly then opened the door, bowing to Mr. Faulkner as he passed through, saying, at the same time, in a voice calculated for Beatrice's ears—“Mr. Faulkner, how is your sister, Mrs. Harvey?”

The effect of these words made Beatrice immediately wipe her eyes; and, trying to smile, she presented her hand to Mr. Faulkner, with whom her mother immediately left her alone.

Mrs. Henniker, and Mrs. Wycherly, having fully persuaded themselves “there was not any earthly reason why Beatrice could refuse Mr. Faulkner,” comforted themselves in the idea that a marriage would take place in the family before the year was out; and Mrs. Wycherly, in the

joy of *her* heart, promised Mrs. Henniker should be present at the ceremony.

"Well," said Mrs. Wycherly, going up to Beatrice, after her conference with Mr. Faulkner was over, "how have you parted?"

"Very good friends, I trust," said Beatrice, with downcast eyes.

"Something more than *friends*, I trust," exclaimed Mrs. Wycherly, with some warmth.

"Yes, dear mother, all *you* wish."

"Oh, then I am so happy!" said Mrs. Wycherly, kissing her cheek; whilst Beatrice looked any thing *but happy*.

"And I," exclaimed Mrs. Henniker, "wish you joy: this is no more though than you deserve. So, my dear girl, *you are* the chosen one! God bless you, and make you happy!" And every one else seemed happy, pleased, and delighted, but Beatrice.

Mr. Faulkner, when he had obtained Mr. Wycherly's consent, had no one's else to ask; and he made himself a field of

promise in the anticipation of one day calling Beatrice his own; and, if he could have *his* determination, it would not be a very distant one; for he wanted no long engagement to assure him she was, of all women, the one most calculated to make him happy.

Beatrice, however gratified she might be in receiving the attentions of a young man, whom all the manœuvring mammas had not been able to entrap; however gratified she might also be in receiving the offer of his hand and heart, seemed to fail in a due return of unrestrained affection towards Mr. Faulkner: there was a restraint in her manners, which a lover knew not how to tolerate; and yet there were times when this reserve was laid aside, and he observed it was generally less so, when he expected to meet a return of affectionate interest; when she observed him unhappy, she would ask him why he was so? she would tell him she preferred him to all the world beside; and once she gave him occasion to say—

"I believe, Beatrice, you do not *love*, you only *pity* me." But the generous full confession which followed this remark, convinced him she *did* prefer him to all the world. But then what had prompted her *first* refusal? not the objection of parents, for she knew their sanction would gladly be given; not her own heart, for she acknowledged he had ALWAYS possessed it; and Beatrice was too candid, too sincere to deceive.

"Beatrice," said Mrs. Wycherly, one evening, when he was there, "I wish you would sing that sweet air you and Miss Coxæ used to practise. Mr. Faulkner, you never heard Beatrice sing—at least, not any thing worth hearing;" and whilst Beatrice was untwisting the stool for the piano, she added—"The Coxes have not been friendly at all lately: what *has* offended them, I wonder?"

It was mere chance, but Mr. Faulkner's eye fell upon Beatrice; she was confused—she blushed, and employed herself assiduously in the arrangement of some

spar which laid on the instrument; she could not meet *his* eye with open confidence; but, distressed and embarrassed, asked—"Whether she should play, and what?"

"The song I just mentioned," said Mrs. Wycherly: "have you forgotten what it was?"

"The book was sent home," Beatrice replied; and Mrs. Wycherly, resolved on having some music, asked Susan to sing, and Beatrice to play, telling Mr. Faulkner, at the same moment, Beatrice was so simple, she never could do any thing well, without it was sanctioned by the Coxes.

"The Coxes seem to have been Beatrice's world," said Mr. Faulkner, with a tone which was at once playful and kind.

"Oh yes, I owe much to them," she answered; and, with an evident wish of changing the conversation, she began a little waltz, formed out of a German hymn.

"That is a beautiful little thing," said

Mr. Faulkner; "and well written out. Your own performance I suppose?"

"Oh no," she replied, quickly.

"No, that is Mr. Coxe's," said Susan. "Don't you remark the Italian *t-f's* and *e-e's*? All the Coxes write that sort of hand;" and Beatrice blushed intensely again under Mr. Faulkner's eye.

"Every thing this evening seems concentrated in the Coxes," thought Mr. Faulkner; but he was too wise to be jealous; for he had a perfect dependance, a perfect and implicit faith in the goodness, truth, and virtue of Beatrice; no one but herself could shake this feeling; no one but herself could militate against his dependance in her affection; it must be her manners, her lips, her conduct, which must persuade him *he* was no longer loved.

A quarterly assembly drawing near, it was of course deemed advisable Beatrice and Susan should go; besides that, Mrs. Wycherly took a pleasure in shewing the world Mr. Faulkner was to be HER son-in-law. She meant to be late: she meant

Susan should be beauxed by her cousin, William Holt : she meant also, Sawbridge should attach himself to a young lady, who had not only a pretty face, but a pretty fortune to recommend her. Mr. Wycherly (if he were able) and herself were to precede all these fixed couples.

To the finite understanding of woman, it appeared easy to accomplish a pleasant party for a ball. In the first place, Mrs. Wycherly was a sanguine being, and, as females many of them do, loved to triumph : the very success of her dress, her turban, her air, was intended to express—  
“ See, my daughter has gained the prize; my Beatrice—the unnoticed, plain, unthought of Beatrice. Down to the dust, ye proud beauties! ye manœuvring mothers, *I triumph!*”

Well, the evening came; Mr. Faulkner, Miss Forster, Sawbridge, Susan, and Beatrice, were all waiting for the arrival of William Holt, who had promised to be there at half-past six. The windows had been opened and reopened, until patience

was exhausted, and the time appeared interminable; no carriage — no horseman appeared; and, in despair, the ladies went to the piano, and the gentlemen to a corner of the room, to look at a painting, which was esteemed an original of some value; Mrs. Wycherly trying to read, sometimes attracted to the window, by the hopes of hearing William had arrived, then distracted by songs and waltzes on the piano.

“Come, mother, we had better be off,” said Sawbridge, drawing out his watch; “it is ten now, and we have nine miles to go.”

“Wait half an hour longer,” said she, in reply.

“Half an hour! As you wish, certainly; but William will not come to-night. Let me order the horses.”

“Not yet,” and with that answer he was obliged to be satisfied, until an hour had elapsed, and then the welcome words — “Well, we *had* better be going,” roused him to action; and the ladies, abandoning



the piano, flew (as ladies say) to the carriages, sprang in, and dashed off to the ball.

"There is a full ball, I dare say," said Susan, as they drove up, and passed a crowd of carriages and post-chaises by the assembly-house door.

Full indeed they found it when they entered. Mrs. Wycherly, in grand style, prepared to swim in, letting fall her train at the moment of victory; but there was no room to *swim*. The door opened, to be sure, and any one within a yard of her might have seen she wore a blue satin gown, flounced with elegant lace; but we defy any one, at a greater distance, to have perceived whether she was ill or well dressed; whether she wore a round dress or a train; for the train got stamped on in the crowd, which obliged the unfortunate lady to take it up: in endeavouring to extricate it from the rapacious feet which mercilessly crushed upon it, she stooped her form so as to catch her turban against her husband's wig; the

turban became disarranged — Mrs. Wycherly embarrassed; for if it was knocked off, she had not a heroine's head of clustering hair to fall down upon her shoulders. With a sorry air of triumph she reached the middle of the ball-room: though a large party were dancing, there was not a seat to be had. No one seemed to be particularly struck by the appearance of herself or party; and there was no resource but the card-room: every table was full there; and the apartment itself so hot, it could not be borne.

“What SHALL we do?” she exclaimed in despair, appealing to Mr. Faulkner and her party, who, by dint of struggling, had kept close behind her. “I am half dead with heat, and see nobody I know.”

“There is the Coxes,” said Susan; “and Miss Cøxe will give you her seat; for she is going to dance, I think.”

“Going to dance! impossible! the set is crowded immensely now. However, I will go and take her seat.” So, by crushing along, and fair words, and smiles to

all who impeded her progress, she arrived within a yard of the destined spot, the haven of bliss—had even began a speech of polite import, such as—“*Will* you do me the favour of giving me your place, Miss Coxe?” when Miss Coxe rose, gave her hand to her partner, and, without apparently attending to Mrs. Wycherly, got up, and only bowing, said—“It is very warm, yet I *am* going to dance.”

“And I,” said Mrs. Wycherly, “will gladly sit down—in your——” seat, she would have added, but a fat lady, who had been standing till she could stand no longer, dropped into it; and thus vanished Mrs. Wycherly’s hopes.

“Surely you had better return to the card-room,” said Mr. Wycherly, who began to feel the same propensity for a seat as did his lady; “one cannot stand here all night. If I had *known* I would never have come.”

“Well, but now you are come, you must make yourself as comfortable as you can,” said Mrs. Wycherly. “The young

people are going to dance; and if we can get back to the rooms, perhaps we can find a vacant table."

She was quite right to substitute the word "*if*;" not even polite courtesy, fair words, cramming, crowding, or squeezing, could procure her a passage, much more a place in the card-room.—"Indeed, ma'am, it is an utter impossibility for you to pass here," or—" 'Pon my word, there is *no* room," or—"We should be most happy to let you pass, but cannot," was all she could obtain; and, had she gained the "promised bliss," not a chair, not a table, not a place was vacant.

Mr. Wycherly, in despair, contented himself by being pushed up in a corner, against which he rested his weary limbs; but Mrs. Wycherly was DETERMINED to quit her present situation, and gain a better; though lady A—— V—— assured her she was exceedingly well off, and might be amused by "seeing the dancing."

"Seeing the dancing!" so she might, had not lady A—— V—— been five

inches taller than herself, and her head encumbered with a Parisian turban, of notorious size, which ever and anon kept Mrs. Wycherly from the dangerous pleasure of seeing any thing, but that it was composed of satin, crape, and French beads. French beads! Mrs. Wycherly wore pearls on hers. No one saw hers; every body saw lady A—— V——'s.

“A ball is really a very delightful thing,” said lady A—— V——, as she sunk into a chair, on the back of which Mrs. Wycherly was leaning. “You see how Jane and Annette enjoy it. Are *your* daughters here, Mrs. Wycherly?”

“Yes, your ladyship,” she replied, applying to her glass.

“Oh, indeed! I can't see them. This ball is a full one—too full for comfort; the dresses won't shew in such a squeeze, which is rather unfortunate for those who have new ones, and come to display. To convince you of my economy, here I am in an old white satin,—but it does not signify.”

"Oh no," said Mrs. Wycherly, drawing up the train of her gown, or rather endeavouring to draw it up from the feet of a gentleman near her. "No, they only get spoiled terribly."

"Yours, for instance," said her ladyship, a little *mal-à-propos*, pointing at the same time to an enormous gash in Mrs. Wycherly's, who, in the pride of her heart, scorned to admit she did not know it before, and then added—"It is of no consequence; we really must expect these things, if we come to such crowded places."

But it *was* of consequence, as a certain sigh and frown might have proved; but lady A—— V—— was then happily engaged in remarking how well her eldest daughter looked and danced, and never observed it.

"I wonder where Beatrice and Mr. Faulkner are," said Mrs. Wycherly, with motherly pride.

But lady A—— V——, who understood human nature, did not choose to

hear, and would not gratify her friend (her *visiting* friend), by even a hint to the engagement which subsisted between the two beings of whom Mrs. Wycherly spoke.

“ You have heard, I suppose,” said she, when a little peace was obtained, by a new dance being called—“ your ladyship has heard, I suppose——” she said again, with a countenance which revealed what was the import of her conversation.

“ Heard what ?” inquired her ladyship, with provoking, calm, mortifying ignorance, and with a certain lift of her large black eyes ; and Mrs. Wycherly felt awkward in being obliged to expound on a subject which she forgot was not equally delightful to lady A—— V—— as to herself ; she forgot too, lady A—— V—— was neither more nor less than a most terrible quiz, and would probably mimic her, in all her glory, at the next party she gave.

“ It is a very fine match,” said she, in

reply to all Mrs. Wycherly advanced. "And so Beatrice is the chosen? Susan looks ill. Is she here to-night? Bless me! it is nearly impossible to know any one, except one's own children. Is Susan consumptive? She is the very red and white for it. But don't let what *I* say disturb you: *I* am no judge, for I thought Anne, *your* Anne, would have lived for ever almost."

Mrs. Wycherly looked up; but lady A—— V—— had a heart of stone, and did not, at the moment, perceive the mother gasping, as if for breath, and panting to restrain the power of feeling which threatened to burst forth; but the honourable Miss Vesey, who wanted to shew her elegant *vinaigrette*, leaned forward, and presented it to her, at the same moment touching lady A—— V——'s arm, to direct her attention to the paleness of Mrs. Wycherly's countenance.—"Mrs. Wycherly has been *standing* so long," said she, with an appealing voice.

"Ah, she has," but lady A—— V——



made no effort to move—" and, I dare say, would be glad to sit down, if there was a chair any where;" and Miss Vesey observed Mrs. Wycherly assented silently to this. " Ah, very likely, but they are all occupied," continued her ladyship, calmly; " and I fancy there is not one to be had. I wish you would tell Annette her sash is untied, will you? She will be near you when she turns her partner again."

" Pray let poor Mrs. Wycherly out; she is almost fainting," said Miss Vesey.

" Ah, the heat is immense," said lady A—— V——; " I wish enough the ball was not so full. Don't, my dear Miss Vesey, forget Annette's sash, will you?"

Mrs. Wycherly, however, left the room just time enough to prevent her fainting; for the remembrance of her lost daughter, together with the heat, the immense crowd, and squeezing, prevented her remaining in a situation which was most uncomfortable and distressing a moment longer.

"It is high time to go home," said Mr. Wycherly, as she recovered, "for I am tired of my life; and if you have no objection, the carriages had better be ordered."

"We can't think of going before supper," said Mrs. Wycherly. "Besides, the young people wish to dance; and I hope the room will be clearer, for lady A—— V—— protests she must leave early. I can't think what makes the Coxes so shy to-night."

"No more balls for me," advanced Mr. Wycherly, wiping the perspiration from his forehead; "and, I am sure, I wish I had never come to this; such a heat and confusion—such a turmoil!"

A sudden grasp of the arm made him turn round, and discover his nephew, William Holt, whom Mrs. Wycherly expressed herself "most happy to see," and immediately directed him to bring Susan to her; and transient gleams of comfort stole in to enlighten the miserable gloom of the evening; but these gleams brightened into palpable sunshine, when Wil-

him, in his way home, professed himself Susan's lover; that he came with the full consent of his father, and wanted only hers to make him happy.

She promised to consider; and all this passed during the time Beatrice and Mr. Faulkner were falling into a disquisition on planets, comets, and stars; none of which, however, graced the heavens at that advanced hour of the morning.

## CHAPTER IX.

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WHEN Susan *did* reflect on the offer of her cousin, she had much to consider; there were passages in his life for which he could not or would not account; they were wrapt in mystery, enveloped in a veil which his hand alone could undraw.

"Be convinced of my innocence," he said, in reply to what she had advanced to him, "and in after time, you may be as-

sured, you will not regret you have had this dependance upon me. The singularity of my conduct must excite your curiosity, but, could you dive into that which actuated me to it, it could not merit your reproach : when there was no hope for me, and I even thought you preferred another, I loved you ; and now that my father gives his full and free consent, do not, for this unfortunate circumstance, make me more miserable than I have yet been. I admit all my proceedings are of a romantic cast ; but let the strength and power of an affection which has existed for years plead for me."

It did so far plead for him, as to gain Susan's consent—finally that of her father ; and, after a short lapse of time, all matters were settled for the marriage.

It was then Mr. Faulkner's turn to be importunate, to express his wish both weddings might be celebrated on the same day, and to hope that his wish would be complied with without much hesitation.

In this he was disappointed ; by excuses,

vain here to mention, by even the moving and touching symbol of tears, Beatrice implored him not to hasten that event.

“ Beatrice,” he exclaimed, alarmed at her manners, “ if I could look into your heart, what should I see? Think me not harsh; but I am justly anxious at your conduct. You have told me I *was* the man of your choice; it remains with yourself to confirm that idea. Why delay our marriage, if you really wish it ever to take place? If you do not, end my suspense at once, and tell me so. It strikes me something dwells upon your mind. Make me your confidant, and if you **ARE** changed. —if you were persuaded by motives which I shall not enter into, to accept me, at least deal mercifully by me, and let me not continue in a pleasurable dream, which must vanish at last.” He kept his eyes watchfully fixed on hers whilst he spoke; and, taking her hand in his, he drew her towards him.—“ On so frail a thread is human bliss,” he said, gently, “ that I am constrained to exhort you to act honour-

ably and openly by me. We are changeable beings. *You may be changed.* Believe me, I will readily forgive this lapse; for we cannot govern our own affections, else I had not suffered half what I have."

But from Beatrice he could only learn she loved him still; her heart was unchanged; nor would it ever think differently to what it did. Her conduct, she feared, was not all it ought to be; but she would amend for the future.

"You must be less melancholy, and more cheerful," said Mr. Faulkner, pressing her hand to his lips, "or I can never be happy."

The pianoforte being open, she gladly flew to it; and whilst contending emotions distracted her mind, she began an air of which Mr. Faulkner was remarkably fond.

"This is also *very* pretty," she said, turning to another; and she would have played that also, had not Mr. Coxe been announced.

"Mr. Coxe!" said Beatrice, darting

from the side of Mr. Faulkner; "ask him into the dining-room—any where but here;" and whilst the colour hurried to and fro in her cheek, and the evident disorder in her manner struck Mr. Faulkner's attention most forcibly, Mr. Coxe entered the room. He did not offer his hand to Beatrice; nor did he meet her in the friendly way which he was wont to do; but, after a few indifferent remarks, he inquired whether she had done with the books he had lent her, as he believed he was going abroad soon, therefore he wanted them; and he also called to say—"Good bye!"

"Are your sisters going?" said Beatrice, with evident hesitation, both of look and voice.

"He believed so, but they had not decidedly made up their minds."

"I should think they will call on you before they go," said Mr. Faulkner, affecting pleasantry: "they are *'your world'*; you know, Beatrice."

Both Mr. Coxe and Beatrice were grave and silent on this remark ; and Mr. Faulkner found something had transpired which had severed that great friendship which once subsisted between them. At the assembly, their manners had been cool, formal, dignified, and restrained : they *had* spoken, certainly, but with an evident suppression of all familiarity or kindness ; and they had seemed also to avoid all intercourse or converse with Beatrice, with whom they were once so intimate and friendly.

“ Look at this new painting,” said Mr. Faulkner to Mr. Coxe ; “ how well the artist has delineated the different passions in the countenance—rage, horror, self-satisfaction, and revenge !”

“ I don’t know the subject,” said Mr. Coxe, rising ; and as he did so, his eyes encountered the piece of music laying on the pianoforte.—“ *What*, have you been playing this ?” he asked ; with evident pleasure, both in his face and tone.

“ No, I was just going to begin it, as

you were announced," said Beatrice, with confusion, and an apprehensiveness of voice which Mr. Faulkner did not care to see.

"Is it a favourite of yours?" inquired Mr. Faulkner, turning to Mr. Coxe.

"Of mine! yes—I gave it to Miss Wycherly—I taught her to sing it;" and, catching Beatrice's eye at the moment, he pointed to a line, containing these words:—

*"Change not—change not back again,
To what thou wast in former time;"*

and Mr. Faulkner, who was too quick-sighted not to discover which the two lines were, felt an emotion at the time to which, till then, he had been a total stranger.—"He who has once been deceived, finds it difficult to trust again," says an author, with whom we are acquainted. But when Mr. Faulkner told Beatrice he loved her, he felt no doubts of her faith or constancy; it was for her conduct to give them birth—for her manners to breed suspicion, and engender doubt and un-

happiness in his mind ; and so far from being ready to believe any thing detrimental to her, he always drew the best inferences and conclusions from that which passed under his observation ; but, for the first time in his life, he began to think Beatrice had once esteemed Mr. Coxe more than a friend ; perhaps had given him some promise, some encouragement, or some hope, else why should he fix his eyes so intently on hers, and point out the two lines — “ Change not — change not,” &c. ? — And Beatrice seemed to feel and understand all his allusions, and to bear the coolness of the Coxe family, as if she *deserved* and *understood* it. When he had said — “ How strangely they behaved ! ” she had replied — “ Perhaps I have given them reason,” and dropped the subject totally.

Mr. Coxe, by insensible degrees, was losing his reserve of manner, and beginning to draw Beatrice into conversation, when Mr. Faulkner was summoned to

look at some "horse of famous *pluck*," which Sawbridge had just bought.

Sawbridge was always in haste, always in a hurry, could not, of course, wait a moment, and Mr. Faulkner hastened to obey the mandate. As he closed the door of the room in which Beatrice was, he heard Mr. Coxe, in a passionate tone of voice, say—"Are you indeed engaged to Mr. Faulkner?" He did not hear Beatrice's reply, for he hurried to the stable; but the words sounded unpleasantly on his feelings, and he could not easily forget them.

On his return, he found Mr. Coxe was gone; and Beatrice, with eyes red from weeping, endeavoured to meet him with calm composure; but any thing but composure seemed to predominate in her breast: averted looks, and starting tears, excited his dismay; and so conscious was she of creating anxiety and pain in him, by her conduct, that she pleaded indisposition as an excuse, and retired.

When dinner was ready, she descended;

and Susan, after telling her Mr. Faulkner was gone, presented her with a small billet, written in pencil, in which she found the following words :—

“ I charge you, Beatrice, by the power which you are aware you possess over my affections, to tell me whether you do not repent your engagement with me? Do not keep me in ignorance of that which distresses you, as I cannot be happy whilst you are miserable. Can I do, say, or act, in any way for *your* comfort? Pray tell me, if you wish to act generously by *me*.

“ Yours, devotedly,

“ J. F.”

When time permitted, Beatrice wished to answer this billet; but, to confess the truth, she knew not which way to pursue; she dared not tell him the whole undecided fact; she felt equally miserable in veiling

the truth from him.—“Would that we had never met!” was constantly in her lips; “or that we could meet to be happy! Oh! he will hate—he will despise me, when he knows all!”

With desperate energy she began a reply. She told him she was unworthy, ungrateful, deceitful; that she deceived not only him, but her family; that she begged, entreated he would forgive and forget her.—“Let my extreme sense of suffering,” she said, “be a sufficient punishment. Be my friend; and, if we meet, do not treat me as if you hated me. There were so many reasons for my conduct, that I hope some may plead for me. And yet, what can plead for a person who acts mysteriously and ungenerously? Let the misery I acknowledge I must experience in this separation, my desolation of mind, I may add, my distraction, plead for me. I MUST RELINQUISH YOU. The visions I indulged may exist no more—the dreams I have thought on must perish everlastingly. I wish you happy with

one a thousand times more deserving than myself—a woman who, in accepting your love, treats you with open candour and generous confidence. *I must not regard you.* All that ought to be dear to me, demands it of me. Farewell!”

On reading this over, sobs of deep agony and extreme misery burst from her heart. She sealed it, and then, with restless hands, reopened it, to add a few more lines to the man from whom she was about to part for ever. The burning forehead—the trembling hand—the inflamed eyes of the writer, told a tale of sad distress. Her father—her mother—her brother, would all wonder at her refusal; and she could no longer expect a home with them, after she had once avowed the reason of it. Oh! she must pause before the cloud burst; she must consider where it was likely to end, and what would be the tenor of her future fate; she must prepare to suffer, to endure all that angry parents could say; and also to bear reproaches at her conduct. She weighed well all these things in her

mind; and, as she did so, the distress of her situation seemed to thicken and increase; and, on deep consideration, she destroyed the billet she had written, and merely wrote a small note in reply, saying—"Her sentiments were not changed."

Mr. Faulkner then demanded an interview, which was granted, without any hesitation.

The bustle attendant on Susan's marriage, prevented Mrs. Wycherly from perceiving how miserable Beatrice appeared in her mind. She had enough to do to see the dresses—to plan chimeras, which perhaps would never be realized—and to triumph in the idea of all *her* daughters being well married; and had the supreme happiness of letting lady A—— V—— (who, poor woman, had been manœuvring all her life) know, "the consumptive Susan" was going to be married.

"*Going to be married!*" said lady A—— V—— to a lady calling on her—"so has Annette, twenty times, "and she is single yet; and Mrs. Wycherly, poor thing! is

such a manœuverer; and it is so detestable; and men see through it so; and report always confirms things in a moment—it always reminds us of sealing-wax, ever ready to take *any* impression. Those Wycherlys are disagreeable girls—not bold or forward, but your modest violets, hiding all imperfections under leaves of shade; vastly amiable—vastly diffident; and, as for Susan, she is a beautiful picture, and *only* wants a frame.”

Lady A—— V—— *believed* (when she saw a post-coach and four roll past her house, with white favours, conveying the bride and bridegroom to their residence) that the marriage *had* taken place, and the newspapers gazetted the account she received of the “grand doings” at the wedding; but lady A—— V—— thought it would be much better “if all had been plain, so much encumbered as Mr. Wycherly’s estate was.”

“Fitzroy,” said she, to a gentleman who was reading a newspaper at the further end of the room, “there is the pretty

Miss Wycherly married to a cousin of hers—William Holt.”

“Indeed! I know him well,” said Mr. Fitzroy, rising; “and, if within thirty miles, I will do myself the pleasure of a call.”

“I am sure,” said Miss Annette, “I do not think Susan so very pretty—she has such an unmeaning countenance; blue eyes cannot be expressive—and hers is a style of beauty so lack-a-daisical. Besides, she is always talking of her books, and her birds, and is so very unentertaining.”

“Nonsense, Annette; you do not understand these things,” said lady A——V——, laughing; “her ‘unmeaning eyes’ have won her a husband, with a fine rent-roll; and your black eyes, child, do not do any good.”

“But they may do a vast deal of mischief,” said Fitzroy, bowing towards Annette; “and, being in black, mourn for the miseries they commit.”

“A miracle! a miracle!” exclaimed Annette—“Mr. Fitzroy has paid me a

compliment; oh, that it could be carved to eternity somewhere !”

“Carve it on your heart !” exclaimed Mr. Fitzroy; “for that is the only pure tablet here.”

Annette put her hands over her face, and lady A—— V—— hoped Mr. Fitzroy would remember Annette was not accustomed to compliments—and they could do a girl of seventeen no good.

They should do her no harm, he advanced, and the conversation ended.

Mr. Fitzroy was a man of fortune, and sir James A—— V—— invited him, because he was going to live near him, at a newly-purchased estate; he had also had some acquaintance with him when he was a boy—knew his father and his family, and, like lady A—— V——, would have no objection to his becoming a part of his.

Mr. Fitzroy found every thing very pleasant at Tilbury Place; and, in fact, every thing was done which could make it pleasant to him: there was a library, if he wished to read—ladies and harps, if he

wished for music—horses, if he wished for riding—and company, if he liked amusement. He was by no means a gay man, or what the world, from a judgment from the surface, would have designated a gay man; he was sound, correct, serious, yet pleasing, intelligent, and persuasive—“every thing against which the heart of woman should guard itself,” as lady A—— V—— told Miss Hammonde, and at the same time bade *her* beware; but Miss Hammonde thought it very strange if Mr. Fitzroy escaped all the delicate network accumulating round him: no pretty women were invited during Mr. Fitzroy's visit; and lady A—— V—— took peculiar care that even the agreeable ones should not rise too high in his estimation: she had always something to say on their tempers—their style of living—their extravagance—or their dress. It was thought Mr. Fitzroy saw through all these manoeuvres, without shewing the world he saw, which was wise.

Mr. Fitzroy was, one morning, in the

midst of an interesting account of something he had seen during his tour, when his suddenly ceasing to speak caused the eyes of all present to be fixed on him. He was pale, and about to fall from his chair.

It is said, but with what truth we know not, lady A—— V——, in an under voice, exclaimed—“*Now, Annette!*” and Annette, *understanding* the hint, *fainted!* The breakfast-table was instantly in great confusion. Sir James opened a window—lady A—— V—— presented her salts—and Mr. Fitzroy recovered.

In due time Annette returned; but even her fainting made no visible impression on him. He could have said, he was very “much obliged to her;” but the words would have been commonplace and vapid, and out of nature—a *lusus naturæ* quite; he was not even *touched* by it in the slightest degree, because he did not think it real or natural, and lady A—— V—— began to despair.

Annette was a fine creature; but he did not “affection her,” as the phrase

says. She sung divinely, and played as well—drew admirably—could really touch on modern literature with no mean hand. But, no; Cupid would not be sought—he must come voluntarily, or not at all. But whilst all this playing at fight took place, a far different scene was acting at Brun-dale.

Mr. Faulkner, on riding down one morning, with infinite surprise, heard Beatrice was gone to the Miss Coxe's, and that Mr. Coxe had taken her in his gig. He felt hurt she had not told him of her intention; and Mrs. Wycherly perceiving the working of the spirit within, said—“Oh! it is only for the day. Indeed there had been some coolnesses, entirely between themselves, for *I* could never divine what it was; so she is gone to be reconciled to them. Mr. Coxe drove her, to be sure; but what of that? she does not mind the weather. Stay and dine with us; she will be home to tea.”

Mr. Faulkner stayed, but Beatrice did not arrive to tea; and as he was engaged

to supper at Mr. L'Oste's, he was just going to order his horse, when a servant, in the Coxes' livery, rode up the lawn; he brought a letter, the purport of which was, to entreat some clothes might be sent to Beatrice, as she wished to *stay* a few days. A few lines of this may suffice.—
“There is a ball to be given at ———, which my kind friends wish me to visit; many other things, my dear mother, press me to request you will permit me to be from home a week.”

In the midst of the disquisition, of whether leave should be granted or not, Mr. Faulkner found it nine o'clock, consequently time for him to be off, and away he went; away also went Mrs. Wycherly, to select some dresses for Beatrice—sent them, and all seemed tranquillized, at least for a time.

CHAPTER X.
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The sea that was awhile so calm,  
The wind, which laid without a breath ;  
The heart that beam'd no thought of harm,  
But peaceful seem'd, as one in death.

All of a sudden there arose,  
The wild wind's power, the sea-storm's swell,  
The heart grew press'd with many woes,  
The tempest deep, and heavy fell.      AUTHOR.

MR. Faulkner felt some difficulty in curbing his mind as to Beatrice's conduct ; he felt her shyness towards him most sensibly, and so far did he work upon his own feelings, as to write her a small note, begging an explanation of the past: the burning desire he felt vanished, when he reflected she must have given Mr. Coxe some promise—some vow, and then broken it. It was possible she *might* love him ; if so,

they must part; he would have a personal interview with her, and insist on an explanation taking place. He could not enter even on that without dread; to separate himself from her, seemed a separation from himself. Yet he could not admit the idea of loving a woman, who perhaps cared but little for him. He mounted his horse, and rode over to lord Coxe's—sent his name up—and requested to see Miss Wycherly, if she was at liberty.

“Heavens and earth!” exclaimed Beatrice, when she heard of his arrival, covering her face with her hands, “what shall I do? What will become of me?”

“Do not see him,” said Miss Coxe, calmly; “there are but two roads for you to pursue; your fate is in your own hands; your destiny—your future destiny, depends upon your strength of mind now.”

“How shall I redeem my honour—my word!” exclaimed Beatrice, not daring to lift up a face in which agony was fixed. “How shall I dare to meet the eyes of my parents?”



“How will you dare to meet the eyes—the frown—of——”

“Oh, spare me—spare me!” she cried, in an agony—“I no longer protract—I no longer waver. No—I will not see him.—Go,” she cried, bitter tears rolling down her cheeks, and appealing to the servant; “you must say I am engaged—I cannot be seen;” and when the message was given, she sank down on her seat, in a stupor of despair.

The servant returned, after the lapse of a few moments, and laid a small piece of paper on the table, which, she said, required an answer.

“Look up, dear Beatrice,” said Miss Coxe, touched by her despair, “look up; think how much we love you: bear the trial—and speak to me, dear girl; *we* are all your friends.”

But Beatrice remained, with her head sunk on her bosom, her hands clasped together, as if in the most violent struggle of mind and soul, and her eyes half closed:

“ Mr. Faulkner sends a note to you,” said Miss Coxe; “ read the contents, and return him a reply : the sooner all is done the better.”

She took up the slip of paper, and put it before Beatrice's eyes; the words were —“ BEATRICE, I DEMAND TO SEE YOU;” and as the despairing one read them, a sense of her situation came across her mind, and she arose to go.

“ What would you do?” exclaimed Miss Coxe, catching her by the arm, and looking, at the same moment, intently into her countenance.

“ I *must* see him,” said Beatrice; “ do not attempt to change me from my purpose : my resolve is made ; hard is the trial—bitter are the tears I shed ; but trust, to *me* ;” and with a desperate effort she tore herself from her friend, and hurried to the room where her lover was.

He was standing with his back towards her ; and so little noise did she make on her entrance, that she had time to compose herself before she ventured to let him

know she was there. She dried her eyes; and putting aside her handkerchief, at last ventured to address him by his name.

With a calm but steadfast look he turned round, and approached her—"I fear you think me intrusive," he said, when he could command his voice sufficiently to speak; "but my feelings were so confused, and my mind so perplexed by thoughts which would intrude, that I could no longer rest, without appealing to Beatrice herself, to know *what* this conduct means; whether," and his voice dropped, "she means it as a signal for a separation between herself and me, in favour of some other more fortunate being?"

Beatrice, with an emotion not to be described—a powerful touch of tenderness which few could have resisted, presented and caught his hand in her own; nor did she relinquish it for some time—not till her tears had fallen upon it, and her agitation been such as half convinced him he was yet beloved.—"That we must part, I know; but, oh! in mercy to my honour

—to my heart—to my feelings, think not I have been so worthless as to deceive you! I will no longer persevere in that which must be inevitable destruction—I will open my heart to you, and then you may spurn me from you.”

“Spurn you from me! Oh, my Beatrice!” exclaimed Mr. Faulkner, in a voice which subdued Beatrice to tears.

“Yes; from the first—when you first condescended to love me, I knew we could never be united; I knew—I foresaw—we must part.”

“You knew—you foresaw! Why, then, Beatrice, did you encourage me to imagine—to conjure up a dream of bliss, so soon—so everlastingly to perish, at the expence, it seems, of your own feelings—your word—and what is even more precious—your honour?”

“My honour I redeem,” she cried, burying her face in her handkerchief, “at a fatal, an extraordinary price—and that price is *yourself*! Oh! do not turn away from me—do not despise me; the re-

proaches—the agonies of my own heart are enough!”

“ Dear, deluded girl,” said the generous lover, “ *I* will never reproach you ! and I could not find it in my heart to despise a being I once loved—and still love so well. Come what may, I must be your friend.”

“ Promise me, that,” she said, with extreme and excessive energy, “ when we meet, it may not be in coldness of heart, or mere common politeness, which is even worse than indifference itself.”

“ I promise you that,” he replied, firmly, “ on one condition, that you reveal to me the true and sincere motive which prompts you to reject me. Tell me now ; and whatever it may be, it has my forgiveness.”

She sunk on her knees, embracing his as she knelt—“ Go,” she cried, in a wild and piercing accent—“ go, whilst I have strength to part from you : leave me for ever—and let the agony I feel, convince you it is not loss of love which makes me part ! Go, or my heart—my good resolve

must fail, for nature cannot bear the struggle !”

Paralyzed at her words and manner, Mr. Faulkner could only raise her from her knees—“ You alarm me—you distress yourself, my dear Beatrice,” he said, pressing her to his heart. “ You love me ; and you know to what extent *I* love you. You tell me we must part—Why ? You unhappily have made some promise—is it not so ? You are now forcing yourself to abide by it, at the expence of your own happiness and mine. But who is it will extort the performance of a vow, when they see your distress ?”

“ It is voluntary,” she replied, struggling to free herself from his grasp. “ Pray leave me ; and take with you my wishes for your peace—your welfare, with some being more deserving you than myself. I *must* go.”

“ You leave not this room, till you have told me why we separate,” said Mr. Faulkner, with extreme and anxious tenderness. “ I cannot be tortured by suspense, nor

can I divest myself of hope, until you yourself shall give the fatal blow; for if you love me, you may yet be mine."

"No, no, no," she answered; "I must not—dare not think of you;" and struggling away from his grasp, she darted out of the room.

Miss Coxe met her on the staircase, to catch her in her arms.—"It is past—he is gone," she cried; "we are parted for ever—never, never again to meet!" and, falling on her friend's bosom, she fainted away.

Confounded at the mystery and perplexed tenor of her conduct, Mr. Faulkner could only hope for another interview; the reason of their separation was yet unknown to him, and he resolved to entreat her once again to meet him—to treat him as a friend—if she had any sorrows, to open them to him; and all in his power he would gladly do to alleviate them. He begged pens and paper, and left a letter for her on that subject, to which, in a few days, he received the following reply:—

“ You have promised to be my friend; you tell me (despite all my inconsistency of conduct), ‘ you will do all you can to serve me, in any way which may restore my peace,’ for indeed I have but little comfort left. I have redeemed my lost word, and my honour; I have made a sacrifice, which is so great, I know not whether I can exist under the trial. I am not desolate, I am only wretched, miserable, and unhappy. You have asked me to state my requests, and you will comply with them. One is, that I may never see you more—at least not till I can meet you with firmness and calmness. Better for me and my feelings had it been, had we never met. But this is from the purpose. You ask me to reveal to you ‘ why we part?’ The crisis is approaching, when not only you, but all the world, must know the reason; and in all human probability, before another month is elapsed, my mother will tell you the truth—the plain motive for a separation, which I am certain you must then think eternal.



When I retrace back the hours I have passed in your society—the affectionate interest you took in all my pursuits, my pleasure, my peace, my mind misgives me; I dare not linger on the thought—I dare not give way to a retrospect so painful—*once* so pleasing. I must avoid it, as I would any increase of affliction; it *must* perish, or it will break my heart. Again, how shall I meet the frown of angry parents—disappointer of their hopes, and blaster of all *their* fond dreams!

“ This letter I must not dwell on.— Farewell! And believe no one can, even now, have a greater interest in your welfare—your peace, than the

“ Miserable and unfortunate

“ BEATRICE WYCHERLY.”

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Some days passed by in all the harassing feelings of suspense and banished hope—in all the desolation human nature feels, when the keen knife of fate severs one sweet link from the chain of existence:

rowful repentance. Time must blunt the agonies of despair: time, with steady hand, wipes away the traces of grief from our eyes; and if Time is let to have his reign, we shall have no need of any thing else to cure us. It is while the incarceration and cure are performing, the invalid feels; but let them cut to the heart, down to the seat of life itself, if the malady be but forgotten and set aside.

Mr. Faulkner, on his return from one of his solitary rides, found a letter from Mrs. Wycherly laying on his table. Eager to peruse its contents, he tore it open, and deciphered (though it was twilight, and no candles were in the room) the following words:—

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“ DEAR SIR,

“ By this you will perceive I have something of moment to communicate, relative to Beatrice. Indeed, this is a most sorrowful hour to me, and all of us. She tells me you are parted: to say

I was astonished at this piece of intelligence, would be but expressing little. I am entirely ignorant of the cause. She begs me to say she wishes to see you ; and, therefore, if you will dine with us to-morrow, at half-past three, I hope all will again be amicably settled. She desires her regards—*friendly* regards, I think she says, in which Mr. W. and myself most cordially unite ;

“ And believe me to be,

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Your faithful friend,

“ M. WYCHERLY.

“ *Brundale, Tuesday morning.*”

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Mr. Faulkner dispatched one of his servants with a note, to say he would, with pleasure, wait upon Mrs. Wycherly, and that he should feel most happy if all could be “ amicably settled ;” but, though every thing was involved in mystery, he too much feared it could never be the case.

Accordingly he went ; all was friend

ship and kindness on the part of Mr. Wycherly and his wife. Sawbridge himself was on the *tapis* to know what parted two whom nothing *ought* to part. Beatrice did not appear at dinner; and it was after that meal was dispatched, Mr. Faulkner found himself ushered into the drawing-room, where she was, alone. Both were, for a moment, under the same influence of feeling; and both, that they might be firm, paused ere they trusted their lips to speak. Beatrice, however, was by far the most calm, the most composed; and, as she rested her hand on the back of a chair, and pointed to another, she said—"You, I hope, will pardon my intruding on your feelings a second time, even though I confess, at the moment, I am self-interested in the request; but it is you who must endeavour to make peace with my family for me; it is you who have promised to be my friend, and this I demand, I entreat at your hands. You must break the mystery to them, which I have kept secret for so long a time."

"I will do what you require," he answered, gathering strength from her firmness; "any task you may impose, I will readily execute."

"You must tell them then," she exclaimed, clasping her hand on his arm, "I AM A CATHOLIC!"

"Oh, Beatrice," he replied, letting fall her hand with a nerveless motion, "then indeed I see no hope!" He veiled his face for a moment with his hand, which had been expanded over his forehead. This lasted but for a short time; the convulsive motion of feeling was gone, but was succeeded by one of less evident, yet more restrained pain.—"By those mutual vows of love, we once so happily plighted, have mercy on yourself!—think before it is too late."

"I *have* thought;—I am prepared for difficulty—for unkindness," she replied—  
"for all the world can throw in my path. I save what is far more precious to me than my parents' affection—more precious than your love—I save my own SOUL!"

"Would to God I had the power of turning, and of preserving you!"

"Enthusiast!" said Mr. Faulkner, raising his eyes to hers, "I have known those who have abandoned religion for love; but you sacrifice all that is dear to you for religion. But oh, my Beatrice, beware! reject not the clear evidences of the pure, simple, Protestant faith, which explains and comforts, for one of mystery and superstition—one which darkens and shades the mind with an everlasting gloom!"

"Stay!" and her voice was, for a moment, raised by powerful emotion—"we met, that you might be the mediator between my parents and myself; we met, not to discuss, but to part in peace, and not to animadvert on religious tenets. You to your faith—I to mine; and perhaps, at the last hour, we may each be comforted and consoled by the religion we have professed. The God of heaven may hear my prayer, as well as yours, though presented at his throne in a diffe-

rent form ; for 'tis by the heart alone he judges."

"Pause on the sacrifice," was all Mr. Faulkner could say. "Let me ask you," he added, after a slight pause, "how you could change—how renounce a religion your father, mother, and LOVER professed?"

"How could I renounce what I knew not?" she said, with firm composure. "In my early youth, it was not explained to me; in later years, no inquiry was made of my religious precepts. I formed my own mind. I read books of the Catholic faith. I dwelt on works which spoke of that religion, as 'the religion only by which we can be saved;' and my friends, the Coxes, being of the same persuasion——But why do I dwell on this? 'Tis you who must break it to my parents; 'tis you must heal the breach, and the bonds which I snap asunder."

"It strikes me then, you made some vow to your friends, never to depart from that faith," he said.

"I made a vow," she exclaimed, with sudden candour, "never to unite myself to a man of a different faith to myself; *and that vow I will keep.*"

"You will?" he exclaimed, steadily relinquishing her hand.

"Yes; no earthly power can move me. I have felt agony, distress, and misery, in giving the blow to my own hopes; but I feel for all—my father, my mother, and for *you*. I know, I see what it must be, for ever to be put off from your society—(tears gushed to her eyes as she spoke)—but it must be. I have heard you say, you *despised* this faith; you would not have a woman who cherished it for the world. Your father made you promise too, you never would unite yourself to one who thought as I do. Think what I must feel; think of my sufferings now. Forgive—oh, forgive me! I was weak, frail, and unresisting; but my love for you prevailed, for a time, and might even now, had not my friends stepped in and saved me. Let me say, the few comforts



my home once possessed, made me seek comfort in religion. It was to Miss Coxe I imparted my griefs; and she, by letters the most kind and affectionate, expounding also that faith which I embraced, has made me what I am. I am loosening my earthly ties; I endeavour to cast them off, to make my religion my idol. I own it is a task, a heavy and afflictive task; but Heaven apportions our trials to our strength. The world may abandon me—my father, mother, sisters, may upbraid me—but I can bear it all.”

The trembling and unsteady hand which she passed athwart her face, and the cold shiver which darted through her frame, seemed to deny this; it was only for a moment it existed, and then it passed away.

“A few days since,” she said, “and I had not strength to part—at least, to part in firmness.” Her lips quivered, but she compressed them together, to hide the palpable emotion which actuated them. “But leave me, and that soon, for our calm-

ness cannot reign for ever. There are those to whom a sense of religion has come in a tempest and whirlwind; there are those who have heard the 'still small voice' amid leisure and contentment; but I have distinguished it amid sorrow and perplexity."

"Yours is misguided zeal," said Mr. Faulkner; "faint, and easily set aside."

"No," she replied, "you are mistaken and wrong; 'tis unmalleable, and will not yield to persuasion."

"Do let us debate these matters as we were once wont to do more trivial things," said the lover. "It may be, my Beatrice, when the purity of our religion may be more revealed to you, it may turn your heart to our God, and to our faith."

"I am so fixed," she replied, "the world could not turn me; and if there *be* zeal in my cause, I cannot forsake it."

"Nor will I, if my earthly happiness—my possessions—my all, were to be torn from me, forsake mine," he said, "to embrace one where the holy religion itself is

abused and defaced, and the mind is perplexed, and the imagination made subservient to idols. Consider—weigh well all you have embraced.”

“ I *have* considered well. I know to-morrow—and it will be too late to turn; but can I ever turn when I have found the way to heaven?” She laid her hand on his arm—“ light was the touch, but it thrilled to the bone,” and with a firm voice said—“ Now we must part.”

Then was the time the hands which had met so often in warm and tender pressure, in generous and devoted affection, must be clasped, and sever never more to meet; and two beings, who fondly loved, must take their last farewell. But when Beatrice raised her eyes, the firmness she had assumed gave way; her heart misgave her, and she burst into an agony of tears.

Mr. Faulkner caught her in his arms, and embraced her for the last time.

“ They sin who tell us love can die;  
With life all other passions fly—  
All others are but vanity.

“ In heaven ambition cannot dwell,  
Nor av’rice in the vaults of hell ;  
Earthly, these passions of the earth,  
They perish where they have their birth ;  
But love is indestructible.

“ The holy flame for ever burneth ;  
From heaven it came—to heaven returneth ;  
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,  
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest :  
It soweth here with toil and care ;  
But the harvest-time of love is there.

“ Oh ! when a mother meets on high  
The babe she lost in infancy,  
Hath she not then for pains and fears,  
The day of wo, the watchful night,  
For all her sorrow, all her tears,  
An over-payment of delight ?”

## CHAPTER XI.

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AFTER some time, Mr. Faulkner heard Beatrice had left home—a home rendered most miserable to her by perpetual, and yet natural exhortations of her friends, to change her religion. She had been ill ; and

he reflected it was not unlikely that the distraction and uneasiness of her mind had had a severe influence on her health; he was more inclined to think this, because he had observed a considerable alteration in her looks, since the time which had elapsed between their two meetings. When he inquired of her mother how she was, he was told—"She is better—much better;" but meeting by accident her brother-in-law, Mr. Holt, he heard she was "very ill." He continued his inquiries until he discovered she was out of danger, and in a state of convalescence: he then named her no more in his conversations, but rather seemed to avoid hearing her mentioned, resolved to forget her if possible.

His sister, Mrs. Harvey, with a *mademoiselle* Nantz, came down to stay a short time at his house. It was fortunate *mademoiselle* Nantz was handsome and agreeable—could ride single, and play the harp. *Mademoiselle* had that inexplicable power

of chaining the imagination to trifles, of engaging the admiration of the listener, without dilating in an extravagant manner on her stories, or rendering the sense of them a bit less than it was.

Mademoiselle, as we said before, was handsome; she knew it—was arch and gay—and, without any peculiar motive, she came to stay at Mr. Faulkner's house, admired it as she was driven up, and thought the owner a very handsome man, was content to think he was a good man also, and very content when she heard an early day fixed for her departure. Mademoiselle was not a Catholic—heiress to a large fortune, which would devolve to her on the death of her only remaining parent, madame Nantz, who resided in town, and was an intimate friend of Mrs. Harvey.

There was a beautiful little air mademoiselle was singing one day, which she regretted had not better words to it, and, in mere playfulness, she begged Mr. Faulkner would exert his skill, as a poet, and write some to it.

He pleaded inability ; and then, snatching up a pencil, wrote something in praise of her beauty instead ; but, on our word and honour, there was no flirtation ; it was mere *badinage* and sportiveness—nothing more.

Well, mademoiselle Nantz slipped the paper into her *porte-feuille* of *morceaux*, and would have thought no more about it, had not Mrs. Harvey assured her “ it was odd John should write such things, for he had just been disappointed in love ; and now,” she added, “ he is going the same road over again ; and I shall leave the Lodge as soon as possible.”

“ I wish,” said mademoiselle, and it was a complete wish of curiosity, “ that I could see the damsel who won your brother’s heart. Pray is she pretty ?”

“ Not at all ; very plain ; a good figure—pleasing—clever, and agreeable. But if you wish to see her, and know her, that we can easily accomplish. She is staying with Mrs. Holt ; and we can invent an

excuse for going there. Leave John at home, and the thing can be done."

It was agreed; but adverse fate contrived, the very morning these ladies went to Mr. Holt's, Beatrice was out. They called again; she was *engaged*.

"Well," said Mrs. Harvey, "they will at least return our calls; "we won't stir out a day this week, and so we shall surely see her." But, on the very last day before the week was up, the morning proved fine, the sun shone, and Nature herself tempted them to ride out. They went; and immediately on their return, laying on the table were two cards—"Mrs. William Holt," and "Miss Wycherly."

This was intolerable; and mademoiselle Nantz became so impatient of seeing her, that Mrs. Harvey invited a party to dinner, including Mr. and Mrs. Holt, and Miss Wycherly, specifying, at the same time, Mr. Faulkner was out; and mademoiselle had the satisfaction of finding the card answered her most sanguine wishes,

Mrs. Holt and Miss Wycherly would come.

Beatrice, unconscious she was undergoing an examination, was easy, but melancholy; she received Mrs. Harvey's kind attentions with grateful politeness, and listened to mademoiselle Nantz with an air of pleasure and respect: they talked of books, literature, countries and nations, till Mrs. Harvey drew off her attention, by inquiring whether she had been ill?

The question was ill-timed; and Beatrice, with a smile, said—"No; the situation of my sister's house is supposed to affect me; but I am sure it is not the situation. I grow thin; and thin people are coming into fashion."

Mademoiselle Nantz being in charming spirits, the day passed off well. Though it may not seem unnatural in us to remark, Béatrice was far from being either comfortable or happy: the Lodge, in which some of her happiest hours had been passed, whose owner she loved with a tender affection—the lawn, laid out and

improved under her taste—the grottoes—the walks, never were to be hers; and she was not sorry when Mrs. Holt rose to go, and she was once more in the carriage to return home.

“A charming woman, that mademoiselle Nantz,” said Mrs. Holt, after they had been seated some time in the chariot. “What lovely eyes! and what beautiful teeth and hair! so attractive too!”

Beatrice found her heart change cold, when she remembered the power all mademoiselle’s captivations might have on Mr. Faulkner; yet she tried to subdue all sense of a jealous feeling, and replied—“She is indeed very delightful; I admire her.”

“Oh, Beatrice, that you had never changed!” said Mrs. Holt, with deep feeling. “Turn your eyes to that generous man; his worth—his principle—his heart; least and last, let me add, his fortune—his birth. My dear, DEAR sister, *do* pause, before it is too late!”

“What is all you have said, weighed

against my SOUL?" replied Beatrice. "Do not touch upon a subject so tender. Mr. Faulkner," she added, with desperate calmness, "in all probability, may love mademoiselle Nantz—I can bear *that*; I can bear any thing but what reflects on my religion. Had my faith been to have been shaken, he would have done it. All human appeals—the prayers of my mother, my father—the cries of nature itself, are cold, to his solicitations; yet I have withstood them. Time nor affliction can ever change me."

Susan was silent; and tears alone made any reply.

"I know," said Beatrice, stifling her emotion, "what is about to fall upon me; my father refuses I should ever again enter his doors; my mother calls me her ungrateful and undutiful daughter. If they knew to what extent I loved them——But they do not. *You* are the only part of my family who will receive me; and you shall not have the burthen long. My feelings are roused: I have enthusiasm

and zeal—I have perseverance and strength. I shall leave you; when they can forgive me, I will return; but till then, you will know not where I reside.”

“ You are mad !” said Susan, seizing her hand.

“ No, I am calm; I speak from my reason. I have a heart to bear, and a mind of strength. I have friends too—generous friends. My parents can never force me to marry: they may force me to leave them—to abandon my own native country, and perhaps never to see them more. But perish the thought, which bids me cease to love them !”

As Beatrice spoke, the chariot lamp gleamed full upon her face, which was lighted up with a flash of pale frenzy; it lasted but a moment, then vanished as it came.

“ And where do you go ?” said Susan, gently. “ To keep us in ignorance will be unjust, cruel, and unkind.”

“ I go to Italy, with my friends, the Coxes. There are convents there—but I

shall not seek that kind of life. And when I am far away, let, oh let me hear of your welfare!"

"Indeed you distract me by these thoughts," said Susan; "you leave your father, at an advanced period of life, subject to a dangerous and rapid disease. You shall not go."

The moment of bending the purpose from Beatrice seemed past; she grew reserved and melancholy, assuming a coldness to the family by whom she was surrounded, weeping incessantly: her mind once developed to the world, she no longer restrained herself from openly following the dictates of it; and from the ingenuous girl of frank and pleasing manners, she became gloomy and cold; her very being itself seemed concentrated into one ray, one focus, and one object; and Susan feared that she would embark on some desperate scheme, which might for ever darken her future days: she entreated her to consider her house her home; that she would never name the subject of re-

ligion to her again ; that her opinions and faith should never more be interfered with ; but to all this, the mistaken Beatrice replied—" You will be only thought to encourage me in my waywardness. I must suffer, but it shall be alone."

She however promised to stay some weeks, as it required time to prepare for her departure to Italy ; and she had a latent hope that her parents might forgive her ; they might, on a knowledge of her plans, consider and pause before they proceeded to extremities ; but she judged falsely in that idea.—" Let her repent her folly," they said.

" Oh, may they never regret their harshness !" was her reply, and she burst into tears.

" Remember," said Susan, as she threw her arms round Beatrice's neck, " a home once abandoned, cannot be regained. You may make kind, generous, noble-hearted friends ; but parents once lost, cannot be restored ; and what will the world say, when they are told you forsook your home, you

forgot the ties of nature—the ties of every tender feeling, as a sacrifice for your own gratification!”

“Let them who argue thus,” said Beatrice, calmly, “reflect on what I sacrifice for my religion; let them ask themselves what gratification there is—giving up all this world cherishes—what this world can hold out to me, after parting with ALL which could make it desirable: rather let them say, she sacrificed for the good of her SOUL.”

The wild enthusiasm of her air, the commanding manner in which she had spoken the latter words, caused Susan to let fall her hand.—“You judge rashly,” she said, weeping, as she turned away.

“I judge wisely, you mean,” added Beatrice; “and here let the subject rest: on all save this I can talk with temper. I am slow to form resolutions, but once they are made, few can turn them; and these can never be moved, unless my parents receive and forgive me.”

After repeated letters had passed be-

tween Susan and her father, Beatrice and her mother, and no giving way appeared on either side, Beatrice adhered to her resolve of quitting England with her friends; and for that purpose preparations were making, when Mr. Fitzroy made his first call upon the new-married pair. It did not seem that a man of brilliant understanding, and handsome person, should produce any peculiar sensation in the bosom of Beatrice, whose heart was occupied with different feelings; and Susan, after hearing her husband ask him to stay at their house till his own was finished, only felt pleasure in the contemplation of enjoying the society of an agreeable and pleasing man.

Beatrice was alike indifferent to his solidity of judgment, as she was to his attentions; she took no delight in being by his side, or in his curricule; no pleasure in riding on horseback, nor in music; but, with wild enthusiasm, the flame which had been so long smothered burst forth, and seemed to consume every other.

"It will burn itself out," said Mr. Fitzroy; "this zeal, this enthusiasm, never lasts; and your sister may one day see her error."

"We can only deplore it," replied Susan, in reply; for it was to be regretted, she was the last person in the world calculated to argue with Beatrice on the subject of faith and religion; she was unversed in religious controversy, had read but little, was timid and powerless in conversation; she could only say—"My religion is the best—it is the clearest; why have you embraced any other?" She could adduce but few proofs of her religion being the best, only that it had fewer ceremonies, and was less mystical than the Catholic; she could not dive into theological disputes, nor "wage war" against the comprehensive mind of her sister.

"What a delightful man is Fitzroy!" said Susan, as she was sitting at work one day. "Beatrice, I wish, for your sake, he was a Catholic."

"For my sake!" replied Beatrice, grave-

ly; "that is very kind; but, I assure you, it would be of no use."

"And then you won't ever ride with him," said Susan again.

"But seldom, I own."

"Nor play to him?"

"*You* do that; and he admires your voice, and your singing: he does not heed me; nor I him. He has agreeable talents, and is a man we must like; but liking is not loving."

"No, it is not. How well he reads aloud too! I wish William would; but really he is so strange now. I cannot make out what is the matter with him. I can't say he has bad spirits, but he talks so little; and always leaves us to go round his estate, in which it was but the other day I heard him say, he had no *real* pleasure. Now what could he mean by that? I am sure here is every thing very pleasant."

Fitzroy's sudden entrance stopped any further remark; and at the same moment the chess-board was produced, and to

playing they went, Beatrice pursuing her work at a distant table.

It frequently happens, that a beautiful woman looks still more lovely by candle-light than daylight ; and, as Beatrice raised her eyes from her work, she perceived Fitzroy's eyes, instead of being on his men, fixed intently on those of Susan.

" Come," said she, pretending great haste, " Mr. Fitzroy, *de* go on. What are you thinking of ?"

" I ! oh, nothing ;" and with an air of recollection he pursued his game.

Beatrice thought his eyes seemed to be expressing compassion and regret ; he seemed, without knowing it, to be led away by the intensity of his thought ; and whatever that was, it was of a peculiar nature, and one which he wanted courage to speak.

Susan looked that evening unusually lovely ; her fine and rich curling hair, in glossy ringlets, falling over her polished forehead, confined only by a comb and small blue rose, added a simplicity to her

countenance at once pleasing and simple; her eyes, blue and expressive, were filled with cheerful good humour; and the roses on her cheek were not diminished by a pink curtain near which they sat. Beatrice paused from her work to look at her, and as she did so, their eyes met.

“Won’t *you* play?” said Susan, getting up. “Come, do; and I will go to William, for he banishes himself quite away from us;” and without waiting for either an affirmative or negative, she quitted her seat, and lightly danced out of the room.

“What spirits she has!” said Mr. Fitzroy, as if speaking to himself; “and she is gone to seek her husband to!”

“They are very enviable,” replied Beatrice, answering to the first part of his speech.

He started, as if embarrassed at her having heard any of his remark.—“Yes, they are indeed,” he exclaimed, after a pause; “I wish they may always last!”

Beatrice felt this as a prophecy; but she prudently remained silent.

CHAPTER XII.
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WILL you ride with us this morning?" said Fitzroy to William, as they sat at breakfast. "*Do*, and see how they are getting on with my house."

"I am engaged," said William, coolly; "and my wife has been reckoning so much of the ride altogether——" and he stopped.

"Well, but that need not prevent you," said Fitzroy.

"No—*that* does not prevent me; but I *am* engaged; and as my horse is ill, it all happens very well."

"But you have more than one horse," said Susan, with a look of entreaty.

"Yes—but I do not wish to go;" and there the matter rested.

There had evidently been some difference of opinion between the married pair,

for a determined silence was kept until breakfast terminated, broken only by questions of common courtesy and politeness. Fitzroy seemed to find himself uncomfortable; and Beatrice, rousing herself from her gloom, entered into conversation with her sister, on the colour of the window-blinds; and looking up to those in the room where they were—"They are *rather* too dark," she said, gently; "and have a gloomy cast."

"How long do women keep in the same mind?" said William, with a glance of sudden anger. "They were pretty a week ago."

"I always, dear William, thought them a little too dark," said Susan, mildly; and she tried in vain to repress and hide the falling tear.

Fitzroy turned away; and Beatrice appealed to her book for help.

"I shall be home to dinner at four," said William, as he was leaving the room; "and in all probability shall bring a friend."

with me;" and, with the most ungracious air in the world, he took his departure.

"Come, let us ride!" exclaimed Fitzroy, turning to Beatrice and Susan, "for the mornings are so fine, and we must take advantage of them early, as the afternoons close in so soon, that it will be a pity if we miss the opportunity."

"You must excuse me," said Beatrice, "as the Coxes intend calling, and you will not be gone more than two hours."

"Come then, my dear Mrs. Holt, let us go," said Fitzroy, ringing the bell; and he ordered his horses, not attending to her entreaties of remaining at home.

"Your sister had better go," he said to Beatrice, when Susan was gone to equip herself: "a mind like hers must not dwell on matrimonial differences. If she *could* know——" and he checked himself, in great and evident embarrassment. "But I trust this is only a passing cloud. I think," he added, after a pause, "your sister and Mr. Holt married for love?"

Beatrice replied—"They did."

He made no reply for a moment ; but at last, as he was apparently looking at some distant object with his glass, he said —“ We scarcely know how to trust love, it deceives us so ; I am convinced too Love is blind.”

Beatrice looked up into his countenance with an air of surprise and dismay ; and as she did so, he turned away from her glance, as if wishing to escape observation.—“ The best tempers will sometimes err,” she said, calmly ; “ and I am sure no one could be angry with Susan long ; her very mildness invites returning affection and kindness. Something has disturbed William ; but in another day all will be well and peaceful again.”

“ I hope so,” said Fitzroy ; and the earnestness of his tone, with the generous inflexion of voice, sufficiently convinced Beatrice his words were not mere commonplace. “ I hope so,” he repeated ; and as he left the room with Susan, he said to Beatrice—“ We promise ourselves



a most charming ride, and only wish you were of the party."

She smiled—bowed—and they parted.

But the next day, and the next, only seemed to increase William's gloom and Susan's melancholy: he was absent from home; and when he *did* return, it was in dejected spirits. Fitzroy seemed all concern and apprehension; he endeavoured, by all the persuasive arts in his power, to make peace between the married pair; but none of his exertions were crowned with success.

Beatrice one evening entered Susan's dressing-room, and found her in tears; and she anxiously inquired whether there was any thing in her power she could do to make her happier.

"There is nothing can ever make me happy again," said Susan, giving way to a fresh torrent of tears. "Oh! I am most miserable and unhappy—I know not what I shall do, nor what will become of me! Oh, if you knew all!—Oh, that he was like Fitzroy!"

*Comparisons are fatal things*, and Beatrice thought so; but it would have been unkind at that moment to have said so. She took her sister's hand in hers, and, pressing it with tenderness, said—"I do not desire to know what is the unhappy difference between you and William; in these things none can interfere without danger; and I am sure there must be some strange misrepresentation, which make two persons unhappy, who once so tenderly loved. Susan, my DEAR sister, I know what love is; it can forgive a thousand follies—a thousand weaknesses and errors."

"There is no misrepresentation," said Susan, in a broken voice; "what I know is fatal truth. I feel it is too true. I believe it, though it gives me most inexpressible agony to do so."

Fitzroy's half sentence flashed across Beatrice's mind; the many reports also which had circulated, at William's expense, before the marriage had taken place—the mystery which had never been

unravelling—the silence the family themselves held concerning the affair of the beautiful young woman at Pantley, whom William never named—(and if it was any thing honourable, why should he not do so?)—all concurred to impress her mind with a prophetic feeling the truth was at last developed.—“Have you spoken with your husband concerning this?” said Beatrice: “in even the worst occurrences, something may be done.”

“Spoken with him! No. *I* shall never touch upon it; my manner shall not alter—my tenderness shall be the same, even if my heart breaks in the struggle. Oh! you cannot guess—nor do I wish you ever to know—what I feel!”

Susan, however, formed a false estimate of her own temper, when she said she should not change—that her tenderness would be the same—and that no part of her manners should alter; the continued gloom of her husband—his indifference, even worse than unkindness—his coldness to all her attentions and mildness—at

length darkened her spirits, and with that shade was mingled a reciprocal feeling of calm and cold sentiment.

Men's happiness consists in active exertions—their enjoyments are less domestic—they have it in their power to escape from unpleasant sensations ; whilst women are obliged to be domestic—to have a world of their own among their small affairs of household concerns ; and Susan, in part with many others, felt a chill to all those little pursuits, when no smile of encouraging and congenial love met her endeavours. He no more asked her to sing, or play, or walk, but treated her with a sort of studied politeness, the mere effect of common courtesy ; she enjoyed neither his love nor his confidence ; and the striking change in her appearance testified how severely and deeply she felt his conduct. A thousand times she thought she would throw herself into his arms ; but the day was gone by for such an effort of tenderness—and her pride revolted at the idea. She once only intruded into his study,

with a determination to converse with him on the subject of their misery; but her heart failed her as she entered, and more particularly so when she saw him, with deep and intense emotion, reading a letter, or rather part of a letter, in a feminine hand.—“*Sir,*” said she, hesitating, and turning pale, “I—want a book.”

“You can take one,” he replied, putting the letter aside; and he moved his chair, that she might with greater convenience get to the volumes.

In laying her hand on the back of his seat, she, by chance, encountered his; both hastily withdrew them, as if chilling from the contact. Having selected a book, Susan prepared to go.

“Oblige me, by staying a few moments,” said William, closing the door, but without testifying the least affection in his manner. “Your mother has commanded me to argue with your sister on her rash determination: as I am so much engaged, I depute that most unpleasant of

offices to you; there is her letter—you can make what use of it you please.”

Susan took it without speaking, and was proceeding towards the door again; her pride, her affection, her tenderest feelings, were keenly wounded by his distant and repulsive manners; but he stopped her by saying — “ Do you go to Cranford ball?”

“ Yes,” she answered, “ if you have no objection.”

“ Oh! I can have none,” he replied; and thus they parted.

Sorrow is most heart-breaking and most poignant when unrelieved by sympathy; it is even intolerable and overwhelming; but Susan at least was relieved from this intolerable sense of disquiet, by the participation of Fitzroy in the gush of her grief at her husband's changed conduct. She had incautiously, and perhaps imprudently, placed her confidence in the power of a third person: in her sister's gloomy mind, she saw no hope of comfort; she had besides a feeling of pride, which kept her silent

with respect to her husband's frailty. Fitzroy was, she knew, aware of all; he had been the person who had heard her "tale of sorrows"—her misery at indifference which she could not surmount or subvert, nor indeed account for. In the first burst of her grief, he had soothed her, by telling her—" *She* was virtuous, innocent, and good; and he hoped the knowledge she was faultless to her husband, would subdue her regret and calm her misery."

But when, with an air of distraction, she asked—" Does he love me still? Can you tell me in what I have erred towards him?" Fitzroy turned away, and was silent. At last, on her repeating the question, he replied—" You are faultless."

" But *he!*" she exclaimed, with intense eagerness, and fixing her eyes on Fitzroy's.

" Is a MAN," said Fitzroy, " subject to frailty; but God forbid I should be the means of planting a thorn in your bosom, or reveal——In fact, I must not trust my-

self to those feelings which predominate in your presence, for my heart bleeds for your distress."

"I may judge then," exclaimed Susan, "the extent of my misery! He is unworthy—he——"

"Let me entreat you," said Fitzroy, seizing her hand with the grasp and fervency of friendship, "to keep whatever you may think to your own bosom. Let him not imagine you *suspect*. Be happy—treat him as well as you can—and let your virtue and innocence uphold you."

"Oh, I have then lost his love!" she exclaimed, falling into a frenzy of tears; "and perhaps never shall regain it!"

"Time, and your power of innocence," said Fitzroy, gently, "may do away what reproaches and jealousy could but increase. I wish to act by you as I would by a beloved sister; trust to me, and you shall never find yourself betrayed. To a man different to myself, you would have perhaps been wrong to confide; but if I can, by my sympathy or my advice, give you



a moment's peace, I am more than repaid."

Susan's falling tears alone made any reply.

"Depend on *me*," said Fitzroy, when he left her.

"Since I know the fatal evil," she said, as he was about to close the door, "may I not also know the circumstances? Is not the female young and beautiful? Is she not——"

"I dare not—will not tell you," said the agitated Fitzroy, interrupting her; and he hastily disappeared.

"At least," said the sorrowful wife, "I will not disgust him by my appearance;" and she, with more than ordinary care, dressed herself in a dress she knew her husband had admired—she calmed herself into feelings of kindness, and subdued the melancholy which took possession of her mind: but she felt hurt when he took no notice of her, except to say—"Mrs. Holt, you will let my mother know about the Cranford ball; in all probability she may like to go—I shall not."

"Then *I* shall decline it," said Susan.

"Oh, there is no reason why *you* should not go; Fitzroy and Beatrice will be of your party: and in all probability my mother will be there with you," he answered.

"I wish you to go."

"You shall be obeyed," she said, mildly; but it was very unlike the smiling manner with which she was wont to say those words; and she felt the tears gathering into her eyes as she turned away.

"I have remonstrated with your husband," said Fitzroy to Susan, as he met her in the hall. "Continue to be kind to him—at least, leave no room for complaint on his side, and all may yet be well."

But constant indifference—constant coldness, on William's part, drew down a similar feeling from Susan; and with the greatest concern Beatrice beheld their comfort, their wedded happiness, fast bearing away; Fitzroy alone seemed to think it might be restored.—"I am grieved for your sister," he said; "and I know that the thought disquiets you; let us

change the conversation, and let me talk to you on yourself."

"You had better not," she replied, with caution and reserve.

"At least let me hold that silk for you; or I can wind it myself," he said.

"It is not to be wound," she said, with some gravity.

"Let me then put it in a paper for you?" he said archly.

"To that I can have no objection," and she gave it into his hands for that purpose.

Being completed, he laid it on her box, and began to read aloud some poem which he had found in the study. It was on love, and several lines marked with a pencil drew his attention. Those lines were pure, innocent, and touching; and Beatrice laid down her work to listen to them.—"I wonder whose pencil has been there?" she said, when he had finished them.

"One who perhaps never felt them," said Fitzroy. "Here is W. H. at the bottom."

Beatrice was silent.

“Marriage is a lottery,” continued Fitzroy; “every one thinks *his* is the prize; and it is to be lamented our sex are not open and candid enough to speak the truth—to keep to the truth; and once having a lovely, helpless (I may say) being in their possession, to value the trust. The man who can wrong virgin innocence, is a wretch—but he who forgets his vows of sacred faith at the altar, is one also.—But, pardon me; let me return to my poem, or I shall forget myself.”

Beatrice was inclined to speak, had not the entrance of William prevented her. He threw himself on a chair, and began to read a newspaper, without attending to any one; and Beatrice, after Fitzroy had left the room, rising from her seat, with a persuasive accent, and a timid voice, exclaimed—“I wish you would go to this ball.”

“I hate balls,” he said, sternly.

“But Susan wishes it so—and we all wish it. And do you not think it will

have an odd appearance, our going and your remaining at home?" she advanced.

"The appearance is nothing to me," he replied, in an angry voice.

"At least," said Beatrice, "you would not wish the world to be at liberty to condemn your conduct."

"The world I am perfectly independent of; my own feelings will, for the future, be my guide—they *have* hitherto; and whatever I have suffered by them, be on my own head!"

"But," said Beatrice, her lips quivering, "before my departure, which will be soon, may I entreat that you will endeavour to be in peace with Susan. She has gentle feelings, and a tender heart. Those who interfere between man and wife, touch on a frail string—all this I know; but, amid other painful feelings, let me not go under the impression I leave her in distress."

"You talk, Beatrice, as a sister should; but all interference in this case is desperate and dangerous," he replied; "and it can

do no good to argue with *me*." He spoke with bitterness and sudden feeling, and his manners were such as precluded her from hazarding another syllable.

Lady Holt did not visit Cranford ball, therefore only Susan, Beatrice, and Fitzroy, were there.

On the morning afterwards, on William's inquiring how they enjoyed themselves, Fitzroy answered—"Tolerably so. I danced with Miss Wycherly—Mr. Faulkner with Mrs. Holt; and somehow, I fancied an exchange of partners would have been more agreeable."

Susan denied this, as did Beatrice, and it passed by as a thing of no moment at the time; but soon was all the coolness of William, and the reason of it, apparent to Beatrice. One morning, whilst at work, her eyes caught the piece of paper in which Fitzroy had put her silk: it apparently had been the beginning of a letter which he had written to some male friend, and she judged, that as he had made it a thread-

paper, it could not be of any material consequence ; it was thus :—

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“ MY DEAR T——,

“ Your mentioning to me Mrs. O——d, and the unhappy difference between her husband and herself, concerns me much, especially as I am in a family where a similar unhappiness is existing: this amiable woman is truly deserving a better fate—has made me her confidant. I have endeavoured to calm her mind, by telling her, her own innocence must support her. She is beautiful and incautious, else she would have considered a female friend *as a far less dangerous comforter than a young man*. Yet this again proves her innocence. She did not weigh well the consequent advantages I might have over her mind ; and, if I were so inclined, how I might wean her affections from a man, who insults his wife *by loving another woman*. And yet the sister tells me this was a love match ! All I know

is, he has been attached to ——— years. I am told too, his family advised him to marry, as he was so unsteady, and these are the effects.

“ I will PRESERVE this young woman ; and, if possible, I will reconcile them ; though how to make him give up ——— I know not. She shall (if my advice is of any avail) preserve her temper and affection ; and perhaps I can accomplish my point.”

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Beatrice, on reading this, felt a strong emotion of gratitude towards the writer : she had thought him solid—of firm talent—of generous understanding—and good principle ; but here he was supreme—endeavouring to unite those who had unfortunately differed—bearing with patience the gloom of a petulant man—and acting the part of a mediator, to secure his happiness.

“ Mr. Fitzroy,” said Beatrice, when she next saw him, “ I have read the piece of



paper in which you folded the silk for me. It has been perhaps impertinent for me so to do; but, as you could not blame me for it, under those circumstances which presented it to my view, I shall only say how great the trust Susan has reposed in you. I am no longer anxious concerning your conduct, after having seen this; but shall destroy it. All you have said on Susan is just; and, pray God you may accomplish your purpose!"

Fitzroy was embarrassed and confused.

"I am now aware," she said, "of the extent of the evil; it is not past remedy, for Susan will never disgust her husband by reproaches, nor neglect any thing which might pave the way to happiness. Her heart and her strength may fail in the struggle, unless some kind friend will uphold her. You are that friend, and I am satisfied."

But it may be asked, was there no danger to Fitzroy in being constantly in the presence and society of a lovely and unhappy woman, who, with all the unus-

pecting frankness of innocence, entreated advice and consolation to her wounded mind? and may it not also again be asked, was not Fitzroy a dangerous friend? Young, handsome, and fascinating, judging seriously and virtuously, she could not but respect him; and she could but think —“ Oh, that my husband were but such a man as this!” and comparisons are ever fatal in cases of this delicate nature—what is unattainable, appears doubly lovely, doubly beautiful.

“ So beautiful appears,  
———— that which we cannot reach.”

Susan flattered herself she was not resentful; but when mortifying coolness was alone testified from the man who had won her love, and made her his own—when she beheld neglect succeed to gloom, and unkindness to neglect — her heart swelled with pride, and Fitzroy’s entreaties alone kept her from open reproaches; and once, when the spirit burnt with sudden indignant passion, Fitzroy laid his hand on her arm, and she was silent.

"William comes home very late," said Susan, one day, to Beatrice. "Why did I not see him? Fitzroy purposely kept him away from me last evening."

"I do not know," replied Beatrice.

"It strikes me," answered Susan, with an air of disquietude, "that Fitzroy does it to spare me pain; to-night, at least, I am determined to know;" and for that purpose she sat up. He was even later than he had been the evening before; and to his other vices, with extreme grief, she perceived he added that of intoxication.

"We cannot live in this distressful state," she said; "rather let me return to my parents, who at least will treat me with affection and tenderness;" but Fitzroy, to whom she imparted this resolution, bade her weigh well the consequences, before she even hazarded to name it to any being besides himself—"Do not abandon him yet," he said; "the most powerful of sufferings have a summit, which, when once reached, we can feel with such poignancy no more; think you have now reached

that point, and let not the world and your own heart condemn you for a hasty impulse of the heart. Win him back to you again ; and even if, *for* wise purposes, that is denied, let your consolation be—you have acted right.”

### CHAPTER XIII.

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AFTER Beatrice's departure from the mansion, which was very far from being a “ mansion of peace,” and which she left with feelings not to be described, Susan grew less wretched: by constantly being in the society of Fitzroy, she became attached to his powers of amusement ; the love of her husband she had given up all idea of regaining ; and, as that thought took possession of her soul, a sentiment of despair forbore to urge her to pursue the means.

Fitzroy saw the change, and whether

he considered it as useless to promote the thought, or saw the reality as fruitless, we cannot say; certain it is, he forbore to name it any more to her.

The Coxes were in busy preparation for the voyage to Italy: they intended to continue abroad some months; and, consequently, it took some weeks to equip them for the different countries through which they meant to pass—Russia, Sweden, France, and Italy, were in their projected route, and, in all human probability, it might be years before Beatrice was again at home. She had represented this to her parents in the most touching terms; but the answer she received was—“When you change your faith, you shall have a home with us, *and not till then.*”

This, to a zealous enthusiast, was a stimulus to rebel—a measure harsh, and not to be pursued; and there seemed, with the regret of leaving home, an heroic sentiment of pride, in quitting it for religion's sake. She had once flinched from the mental strife, and only once; it

had been when love had dimmed the zeal of a young and darkened mind; but when her friends had represented the fatal precipice on which she tottered, she had relinquished the danger, abandoned her love, and clung to the faith they feared she would forget.

Miss Coxe, glad of having made a proselyte, had extorted a vow from Beatrice, that she would never change; and it is not improbable but she had then some idea of Mr. Faulkner's power over her mind, and it urged her to say—"It is not consistent, nor can you marry a man of a different persuasion to yourself. Be guarded, my dear Beatrice, how you form an attachment then, and save yourself future grief and misery."

Beatrice had not been guarded; for perhaps she was not aware to what extent Mr. Faulkner had engaged her regard, till he made her the first offer; it was a point of conscience then to refuse him; and when he again laid his hand and heart at her feet, she had the sanguine

and improbable idea existing in her mind, that she might convert him. But she testified her ignorance of his understanding, in encouraging such a chimera. On knowing him more intimately, she became convinced of her error; her friends too, by their coolness, had sufficiently persuaded her how indignant they were at her weakness.—“Oh, I am weak, frail, wicked!” she exclaimed, when she came to a sense of how she must act; “but I will deceive no longer.”

She gave Mr. Faulkner up; she was about to abandon all for her religion's sake. Yet Beatrice was far from being happy or tranquillized.

“Has no one endeavoured to convince Miss Wycherly how wrong she is?” said Mr. Archer, the clergyman, who had attended the dowager lady Holt on her deathbed.

“Oh yes, they have all talked till they are tired,” said lady Holt, to whom he then addressed himself. “There is nothing to be done.”

“ I mean,” said Mr. Archer, with some interest, “ has any one—a minister of our church and creed, endeavoured to converse with her on the subject of her faith ? The difficulties and opposition she meets with heighten her zeal; and I am——”

“ Oh ! I don’t know,” said her ladyship —“ I dare say every thing has been said or done that possibly could. I always said she would be an odd girl, and my prediction is come true.”

Mr. Archer could not be satisfied with this shallow account, and he generously resolved to see Beatrice before she went abroad; it might be, the calm, kind persuasion of an old friend, one competent to root from the mind evil prejudices, in all human probability would make some impression on her, and he determined at least to try what his argumentative powers might do.

He fixed an early day for visiting Ashford-place, where he understood she was, with lady Amherste, staying a short time

ere her departure from England; and jumping into the stage, he set off.

It was a sweet and lovely evening when he found himself in the small village to which he was bound: the autumnal tints on every leaf and tree, the partial beauty of the setting sun, just lingering on the shrubs up the noble avenue through which he was passing, might have attracted his attention, had not all his thoughts been occupied by the object of his mission. After ringing twice, a servant made his appearance. — “Is Miss Wycherly here, and can she be seen?” said Mr. Archer.

“Miss Wycherly, sir, three days since, went to lord Coxe’s,” replied the man.

Very much disappointed, Mr. Archer turned away, and pursued the road leading to the inn, where he found the very thing he wanted: then standing at the door—a postchaise: he eagerly inquired if it was engaged, and was told, that it was going with a gentleman to lord Coxe’s: but little difficulty was raised in his procuring part of the chaise to himself, and

they set off. For the first few miles, such is English reserve, few words passed ; but as they drew near to their journey's end, the conversation assumed a more pleasing and familiar tone.

" It is rather a strange thing," said the strange gentleman, who was a man in years, " that lord Coxe should leave the kingdom at his time of life."

" Yes," said Mr. Archer; " I think it is."

" And especially," continued the strange gentleman, " when we reflect he is by no means a healthy man, ' a man in years,' and ought rather to think of leaving this world than seeing it. I remember my brother's son being sent on his travels; he went through France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Turkey, Poland, and when we asked him what he had seen, he told us, NOTHING.—' At least,' said I, ' you made a journal?'—' A journal!' said he—' how should I have time?'—' But can you remember nothing of the countries?' said I.—' Why, not much: in France I found myself warm, in Italy still warmer,

in Spain cold, for it was the winter time, in Portugal I drank plenty of wine, in Turkey I saw a fine breed of horses, in Poland I broke my own leg, and in Holland I met Wewitzer, and we did nothing but smoke.—But, I confess, I am truly astonished at lord Coxe.”

“You are not, I suppose, going to his house?” said Mr. Archer, smiling.

“I! no. I have hired one of the lodges for my nephew and myself, with the liberty of sporting: lord Coxe and suite (for we must have these things in form you know) went yesterday——”

“Went yesterday!” said Mr. Archer.

“Yes; and if the wind is fair, I believe they embark to-morrow.”

“Stop the chaise, and let me get out,” said Mr. Archer, who felt as others have done before him, as the impossibility and impracticability of seeing Beatrice arose—a more earnest desire and pressing wish actuate his mind, to hold converse with her.

“Well, sir, and now the chaise is stop-

ped——” said the gentleman, with some laughable surprise.

“ I must walk to N——, where, I think, I can just catch the Dover mail,” said Mr. Archer, offering to unfasten the door.

“ No, no, you shall not walk ; we will make this fellow drive us,” said the gentleman ; “ and, as I well see you were unacquainted with the actions of the family, and am sorry for your disappointment, I shall have pleasure in going to N—— with you. There is a book—a quiz on lord H—— ; if you can amuse yourself with it, do ; if not, we will have some more chat.”

Mr. Archer, after due thanks, &c. opened the volume, a page of which sufficed, and found the following:—

“ THE COUNTRY BUCK (on a Sunday) draws on a pair of corderoys, with top-boots, and white cotton stockings ; he adds to these a kerseymere *yellow* waistcoat, and a blue coat ; brushes up his hair, to look manly and fierce — walks into church with an air of defiance, alias saucy pride—says a prayer into a hat but newly

purchased, and then perceives the maker's name—blushes as he returns the squire's bow, and makes an awkward one in return ; whilst the

“TOWN-BRED BUCK, with hair dressed *à-la-mode*, blue trowsers, black silk stockings, white waistcoat, and bird-tailed coat, *cuts up* the aisle with an air, bends gracefully as he says his prayer into his fashionable broad-brimmed beaver, bows to all his acquaintances with *politesse* and genteel pride, looks at his gold watch, to see how it is with the dial, dazzles the eye with his gold seals, crams his cambric handkerchief into his bosom with graceful carelessness, and struts out, self-satisfied.”

Mr. Archer closed the book, and began to converse with his new acquaintance, whom he soon perceived to be an oddity ; a man who had seen life, viewed it through a proper medium, and, as far as he could judge, was disposed to look on the bright side of things. Amongst other anecdotes, he related to him an adventure which

happened to him in the early part of his life : as it was tinged with some degree of interest, we shall briefly note it down here.

“ In the year 17—, during the war with America, it was my fortune to embark in an enterprise, with a small body of men, of considerable hazard and danger ; I was then young, full of an ardent thirst for glory ; and, accustomed to fatigue, cold, and hunger, I had no objection to the measures our commander proposed us to follow. Suffice it to say, he was encamped on the side of a hill, at the bottom of which lay a deep, and almost impenetrable forest ; from this forest we received the greatest trouble and bloodshed—Indians not unfrequently were concealed in its intricate windings ; and our men occasionally fell a sacrifice to their own carelessness, when wandering after wood-nuts, or other fruits. It became necessary to issue an edict that no man should enter the wood alone after sunset ; and so strict were the commands of our head officer on this re-

spect, that no man, under peril of death, dared to disobey.

“ One evening, it being remarkably fine, I stood on the brow of the hill, remarking the beauty of the setting sun, the large forests, the stream of a fine bodied and sweeping river, which flowed at the bottom of the little mountain ; and so far had my enthusiasm led me to go, that I found I had descended the hill, and was almost in the jaws of the terrific and darkening forest. I looked around—the sentinels were at their posts, unheeding me. I had only a small stream to pass, over which our men had laid a plank for their own convenience, which at sunset was regularly taken away : this night, however, it was left ; I set my right foot upon it ; I looked back again to our camp—the men were all engaged in their own business. I passed over it, and then halted again. The forest was gradually darkening as the sun declined : it could be only the knowledge that it was a for-

bidden place which tempted me. I paused—‘If I am discovered,’ I exclaimed, ‘I must perish. I had better return.’

“I paused again. I heard nothing but the watchword—‘All’s well,’ and now and then a word exchanged between our men; and I, with some sentiments of dread, scaled a small mound of earth, and entered into the forest. I amused myself by pulling nuts, when I could see them, every now and then turning my eyes to the small stream of sunray which sloped up the path through which I entered. I determined not to go far, but, merely from a futile curiosity, to proceed as far as I could before night came on. I remember, after I had made this resolve, I leaned myself against a tree, listening to the song of a wild bird, and surveying the grandeur of a lonely and desolate self-sown forest, when ‘my attention was arrested by the peculiar cry of a bird, which seemed to spring from the earth. I immediately made for the spot, forgetting to keep my eye on the path by which I had entered,

but saw nothing. I was aware of the treachery of the Indians, their means of decoying our men, and then murdering them in cold blood. I turned back, to leave the forest, when the cry was again uttered. I stopped. I looked around me; and a little rustling in the underwood of the forest made me clap my hand on my sword. I listened; all was again silent, and I saw nothing but a darkening mass around me. I had lost the path; yet could just perceive a little break of light at a distance. I should have made for it, had not I again heard the cry—the indescribable cry of that bird, which smote upon my ear. I looked to the spot, straining my eyes to discover it, but saw nothing but a mass, or what appeared to me a mass of long dark grass, such as is common in the underwood of those large forests. I should have left it, had it not stirred. I do not scruple to say, my emotions, at that moment, were not to be described; my hair seemed to stand upright; and my hand, with a powerless feeling,

nearly relinquished the grasp of my sword. This lasted only for a moment. I thought it most advisable to dart to the spot, and thrust my weapon in the grass. I missed my aim; and such was the power of the shock, I nearly fell to the ground. I recovered myself immediately; for an Indian, as if the earth had yawned to give him birth, seemed to rise from the place; and a grapple ensued, which I knew must end in the death of one of us. He was a man of skill and power. I struggled with desperate energy for my life. My sword was useless; for the edge of it was turned up in striking it so forcibly into the earth. I abandoned my existence to the strength of my arm; and after repeated efforts, my antagonist seemed to relinquish his hold. I flew with desperate strength, and seized him by the throat; for I seemed endued with fresh energy. He staggered backwards. I pursued him, and succeeded in bringing him to the earth. He disdained to ask for mercy; and had he, I should have hesitated in bestowing it. I snatch-

ed at his tomahawk, succeeded in getting it; and put an end to his life.

“ The scene then became even more terrific than it had been before; for the forest was illuminated by the moon; and it was only through partial openings of the trees I could discover where I was.

“ The Indian lay before me; his countenance distorted, and writhing in the death agony. My path, I thought, had been immediately to the south; but in the wrestle for life, we had struggled into a different and more entangled place. I listened for sounds from our camp, and heard, *at a very great distance*, a faint something, which I guessed were the words—‘ All’s well.’

“ I turned away from the bleeding body of the Indian; for I cared not to see the convulsive spasms of departing nature, and struck into a path which seemed to lead me nearer to those faint sounds. The darkness of night did not appal me; for a soft and beautiful moon shone upon me. I turned to the right, to the left, to

the east, to the west; paths innumerable branched out before me, but which to pursue I knew not. At last my heart beat; for I seemed evidently nearer to the sounds which proceeded from our camp. I bent my way onwards with incredible speed, and only paused when I found myself by the mound of earth which flanked the entrance to the forest.

“I never shall forget how beautiful our camp looked: the white tents, spreading their arms, as it were, in silent comfort and peacefulness over the sleeping soldiers, ranged along the side of the mountain, whose massy darkness seemed to be relieved only by them; the sentinels at their posts; the small river flowing—it looked indeed like any thing but war.

“The plank which crossed the stream was gone; and I again felt myself at a stand. Should I ford it, perhaps one of our men might cool my courage by a musket ball; if I remained where I was, a court-martial, for disobeying orders, would inevitably be my doom, and finally

my death. I had once rendered peculiar service to a man who I was aware was sentinel at one of the off posts that night: I could apply to him to let me pass; but the river near where *he* was stationed, was broader, deeper, and more dangerous.

“The hazard, however great, must be overcome; and I proceeded to the place where he stood. He was standing looking at his firelock; but his eye, catching a shadow in the river, he looked up.—‘Fritz, you must let me pass,’ said I. Not knowing me, he said—‘The word?’—‘All’s well,’ I replied, preparing to ford the stream. ‘For God’s sake,’ said I, ‘do not speak loud! the water conveys the voice; and our men are on the alert.’—‘You have been in the forest, sir,’ he said, recognising me.—‘I have. Have I been missed?’ I inquired.—‘General B—— has been to your marquee.’

“This was no pleasing intelligence to me; and in no very composed frame of mind I reached my place of rest. I saw general B—— the next morning; he was

cooler to me than usual, and scarcely exchanged three words with me during the time I was with him. They were austere and repulsive; and I was glad when the time was gone by which I had to pass with him.

“ In the evening one of the men brought me a small sealed note, bearing the general's crest. I confess, I shook as I opened it; for a court-martial seemed to stare me in the face; and I read it with sensations of extreme dismay, particularly when I found it contained these words:—

‘ General B—— wishes for some conversation with lieutenant A—— this evening, *in private*, if he is at home!’

“ The afternoon was one of dread—of tiresome interminable length; the hours seemed to hang heavy, and yet I feared that they might only bring me too soon before the face of my offended general. I dressed myself two or three times—looked at my watch—appealed to the watches of my companions, and at last took up my book of returns to read.

‘Are you going to the general’s?’ said young captain H—— to me, with an odd smile upon his features, as he threw himself on my camp bed.—‘I! Yes. Why did you ask?’ I demanded, fixing my eyes on his.—‘Oh, nothing; only look at your shirt. Where have you been to get it all blood?’

“I felt my cheeks crimson, and made some excuse of having cut myself, adding, I was a careless fool, and must change it. He did not seem to believe my assertion, but left me to my toilet, which, when accomplished, I set off to the general’s marquee. I found him seated at a table, on which lay my sword; it was one *he* had given me, and it was the first thing on which I fixed my eyes.

‘Lieutenant A——, you disobeyed orders, sir, last night; not only endangering your own valuable life, but that of others.’ He fixed his eyes upon me, and I remained guiltily silent. He rose up, and crammed his hands into his pockets—looked again distressfully at me, adding—‘To disobey orders is *death*; I have

made it so. Had it been any one but yourself, they should have abided by the mandate; and I know not that I am justified in allowing you the least favour, because you are a man who have always met with my peculiar indulgence. Had it been any one else, they would have been shot. The order is—"Be put to death in the presence of the whole regiment." Sir, you have a family, bravery, and a HEART, which calls upon me to grant you mercy. But beware of transgressing again; a second time *shall be fatal!*

"I tried to speak; but the general interrupted me—"Last night," he said, '*past sunset*, I visited your tent; you were out. I called again later; you were not returned. I had letters from your family for you, enclosed with some dispatches. I was impatient of communicating pleasure to you; and it was with some considerable pain I found the young man on whom I would have staked my own life; the young man whose father gave him into my hands, with the remarkable words—"He is wor-

thy—trust him;” the young man whom I held up as an example, should be the first to infringe rules laid down by me. Fritz, whose horse broke loose this morning, and escaped into the forest, caught him, and was leading him back, when I discovered, as I was standing with my face towards the river, he had a naked sword in his hand. I saw he wished me not to see it: it created curiosity and surprise: I demanded it of him, and immediately perceived it was yours. On hearing where he found it, I was aware where you were last night. A dead Indian too was near the spot: *that* saves you.’

“The general paused; and then suddenly turning full upon me, said—‘You are not to suppose no punishment is to be inflicted, or that you are yet safe; military dispensation of justice will not permit this. You must, as a mark of my displeasure, supply the place of the first sentinel who is off duty to-night; and Fritz will come to give me information in half an hour.’

“ I secretly wished it might be one of those posts at a distance from the camp, attended with peril and danger. I wished something venturesome and hazardous might occur, which, if I accomplished it, might give me an opportunity of regaining my general's favour; and it was in these thoughts I was immersed, when Fritz entered the marquee: he seemed agitated when he saw me, and hesitatingly declared his business—looked at me with a terrified and intense expression, which I could not but remark; but I ceased to wonder when he related the object of his mission; it was simply this—at one of the off posts, for eleven nights successively, the sentinels had disappeared; no traces of blood, no body, nothing but the brushwood and grass a little disturbed, had remained; eleven of the bravest men had successively perished, and a general dread seemed to prevail on those who fancied they should next be selected as sentinels in that unfortunate spot.

“ The general looked at me with a dis-

turbed air; and after Fritz was gone out, he advanced towards me, and said—‘ The chances are ten to one against you ; nevertheless, there is a chance for you : in a court-martial there would have been none. You must be sentinel at that place. Take arms ; be cautious ; to lieutenant A—— I need not say be brave.’

“ As I rose to go, the general pressed closer towards me ; he made an attempt to hold out his hand, which I as eagerly grasped.—‘ I may be harsh,’ he said, ‘ but military discipline demands it. A——, I hope, from my soul, you will return safe.’

“ I was touched by his generous ardour ; and, as the duty of commencing sentinel came on at eight in the evening, I found I had no time to lose. I charged my musket—saw my sword was restored to its former state—received it from my general, and, with a few companions, I walked to the extremity of the camp.—‘ Before I leave you,’ I said, ‘ if the least thing occurs, I shall fire my musket. I may

alarm you without reason; but, at the same time, the mystery of these unfortunate men having disappeared demands a remedy.'

" My companions shook hands with me, as man shakes hands with man whom he expects to see no more on this side of the grave; and I could just perceive the white tents at a distance, glittering in the moonrays when we parted; but, before I had gone many paces, Fritz overtook me: he eagerly demanded if I was to be sentinel in that cursed spot? for I might just as well be shot at once.—' I should have been shot,' I replied, ' had I not been spared for this adventure.'—' It is all my fault,' said Fritz, eagerly; ' and I think it is only right I should be the one pitched on to supply Hawkes's place; for Hawkes disappeared last night. It was I that was the means of the general's finding you out; and I hope, sir, you will let me keep watch at a short distance. I asked the general to let there be two sentinels; but he said NO. I then made after

you ; and here I am.'—' Go back, Fritz,' said I, laying my hand on his shoulder, and turning him towards the camp ; ' the general must be obeyed : had I been faithful to his wishes, I should never have been here. You are a brave fellow, and may furnish food for to-morrow's demands. For all your good intentions I thank you ; but I DESIRE you will return to the camp ; and bear with you this watch : if *I* return, you shall give it me ; if not, it is yours.'

" Fritz looked at me, and then at the watch.—' Go,' said I, ' there is no time to be lost ; the hands are pointing to eight. Let me see you on your way to the camp ; and let me pursue my own unmolested.'

" I thrust it into his hands, and again pushed him towards the camp ; for the fellow seemed unwilling to leave me ; and I saw him at every tenth pace turn about to look at me : at last, by degrees, he disappeared, and I made for the post at which I was to be stationed. A short path had been worn by the tread of other men, who, like myself, had kept watch in that

place. At the back of me was a small square of brushwood, which was often the hiding-place of wild pigs, but not thick or tall enough to screen a man; on the left a clear flowing stream, in which I could discern my own figure, formed into a gigantic size, by the slanting beams of the moon; on the right was a large plain, the extent of which was enveloped in a thick mist; and before me lay a range of small hills, beautiful to the eye and foot.

“ I hung my nightcloak on the bows of a tree, which grew near me.—I laid my musket on the grass, to rub my hands. I looked around me—listened—but heard nothing. In case of a sudden surprise, I took my musket up, and, with ‘ measured tread,’ walked to the extent of the path, in which so many brave fellows had stood before me, and been snatched away never to return.

“ The night was so still you might have heard a pin drop; and it is not to be wondered at, that my heart was filled with indescribable sensations as I gazed around

me, a solitary centinel, in a solitary place, not intimately acquainted with the treachery of the Indians; and again HOME, friends, parents, people, whom I might never more see, rushed into my imagination. I had then too lived a free life—my sins full blown, and my frailties unrepented, pressed into my mind.

“ But from reflection I was aroused by the appearance of something on the opposite side of the water.—‘ I will fire my musket,’ I thought; and I believe I uttered these words aloud; but perceiving it only to be a wild hog, I merely amused myself by watching its motions: they are an unsightly animal; and as it carelessly walked along the side of the water, I saw it take a small beaten path, probably made by some of its kindred, leading to the square of brushwood.

“ My attention was rivetted by this animal to such a degree, that, had an Indian been concealed in the long grass behind me, he had plenty of time to spring upon me, and put me to death. I felt sensible

of this, and turned round to look about me—saw nor heard aught of any thing: the camp was just discernible: the moon seemed dying to darkness; and I was so struck with the vast loneliness of the place, I could not forbear giving a few moments to my own thoughts. I judged the hour to be about half-past eleven; for I heard the trumpet at a distance, bearing its brazen voice in the air faintly, yet musically, denoting a change of sentinels round the camp. I was to remain all night; and I took up my musket, walking to the tree, where I had deposited my nightcloak. My old source of amusement, the pig, had, with singular temerity, approached to the tree; it was seemingly unconscious of its danger—it came nearer and nearer. I raised my musket, and should have fired, had not I immediately reflected I should expose myself to the ridicule of my companions, in alarming them without a cause. A sudden spring of the animal, however, created my surprise—it came within five yards of me: all the

treacherous schemes of the Indians rushed into my mind; despite all the constructions my companions might put upon my firing my musket, I determined to do so. The effect of my piece brought the wild creature to the earth, with a groan strongly resembling that of a human creature. I immediately went up to it, and, to my surprise, perceived it *was* a human creature—an Indian, so artfully entwined in the skin of one of those animals, as to deceive even the eye of suspicion. He was armed with a tomahawk and small dagger; and, I make no doubt, it was by this contrivance so many of my brave companions were seduced and murdered.

“ I waited half an hour, when the confused trample of feet, and sound of men’s voices, warned me my friends were at hand: they rejoiced to find me alive; but how was I surprised to find my general himself amongst them, who came towards me with extended arms!”

The rattling of the chaise over the

stones interrupted the strange gentleman's narrative; and Mr. Archer almost regretted they were so soon to part; but, with ready penetration, the stranger proposed to wait till he had made the necessary inquiries respecting lord Coxe's embarkation.

Mr. Archer, after a slight refreshment, was pursuing his way to the place where he deemed he should obtain all particulars relative to the family, when a sea-beaten, honest-looking sailor, who was leaning himself against the shutter of a small ale-house, drew his attention.—“Is the wind fair, my good fellow?” said Mr. Archer.

“Fair for *where*, sir?” asked the man, with a grin.

“Italy.”

“Oh yes; and I've just seen a vessel sheer off for that same place. I've been aboard her.”

“Was it the ——” said Mr. Archer, mentioning the name.

“Yes; and as well a trimmed vessel as ever scoured the sea,” said the man.

Mr. Archer went back to the hotel

where his new-made friend was, with the news his journey had been fruitless. *He* laughed heartily ; but Archer felt it as a very serious affair ; he considered Beatrice as inevitably lost ; and it could not but be productive of painful reflection to one who had once sincerely loved her. He however returned with the stranger to lord Coxe's lodge ; and, after a day's stay, pursued his way to Hethering by the mail.

CHAPTER XIV.

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AND the reader may here justly pause and say, had Beatrice no brother, whose religious profession, and whose tender interest in her welfare, would prompt him to urge her to remain in England ? Henry Wycherly, had he never suggested to her the agony she drew upon her parents, by her adhesion to that faith which had

broken so many affectionate ties asunder? had he *never* written to her, conversed with her, and endeavoured to warn her of what she was doing?

To this it may be replied, no—Henry Wycherly had left the country, though intended for the church; and a fatal tragedy preceded his farewell to his native land. And it may here be necessary to state, our tale must unavoidably experience a change; different scenes, connected *deeply* with the machinery of our tale, must be here introduced; we began, not the history of one individual alone, but that of the “*Wycherly Family*,” a family whose tastes and pursuits were equally opposite and different. In a novel, there are wheels within wheels, which must turn to bring us round to the grand point from whence we set out; and it is our intention to do so with our readers.

Henry Wycherly had talents of a resplendent nature; intellects vivid and capacious; an understanding enlarged by learning and knowledge; and was at once

as widely different from Sawbridge, as light is from darkness. A field of fair promise was before him; but he, with all his wit and excellence, was doomed to feel the want of that which has ruined thousands—RESOLUTION.

His career at the University had been glorious, till the last year, when, falling into a dissipated course of living, he lost that relish for college honours, which it had once been his ambition to attain; he lost with his resolution, what generally follows closely on it, a proper regard for character and self: he could have paused in his gradation from innocence, but he disdained to do so: proud and spirited, he could ill brook censure or advice: he quarrelled with the world; and the world, in return, renounced and rejected him.

Henry, *when he had time*, had corresponded with Beatrice; and she found his letters so sensible—so clever—so spirited, she eagerly anticipated their arrival. During the last year he was at college, he al-

ways complained of "hurry," "haste," and "employment;" from those terms he fell to the expressions of "his anxiety of mind," "his perplexity of situation," "his disagreeable and tormenting thoughts." She was not curious, but yet she earnestly requested him to tell her of his anxieties, and perhaps she might relieve him, if in her power. Alas! poor Beatrice knew not how much he was hurried and perplexed; she knew not how extensive were his debts, and how deeply he was involved in that dissipated course of life which must eventually be his ruin. But when he did inform her, and commanded her never to reveal what he imparted to her, she little knew what she promised, when she said—"It should never be revealed by her to any living being."

She, to save her brother, took the resolution of trying what her poor talents would do to clear him from his debts. Her exertions were successful; she prospered, and the loss of pleasure, parties, health, was not considered, when she com-

posed herself to study and the pen ; the idea she should save her brother actuated all her endeavours, and stimulated her to fresh efforts. Happy girl ! to find her work accepted, received, approved, and rewarded.

She had the happiness of giving the produce of her labour into Henry's own hands, at Balfour Wood ; of hearing him promise never to err again by contracting debts ; for on his father he had never dared to intrude but once, and he found he must never do it more.

RESOLUTION, however, failed ; and Beatrice knew it. Henry trusted implicitly to *her*, and, without hesitation, avowed himself as deeply involved as ever.

Beatrice again tried the pen, had nearly finished another work, from which she expected to receive considerable profits ; and one evening, weary with fatigue, was revolving in her mind how happy she should again make Henry, by setting him free, when a letter was delivered to her : she chanced then to be so engaged it was im-

possible for her to read it, for there were friends below, in the drawing-room, whom she had been summoned to attend ; pianofortes were going, and quadrilles were on tiptoe ; she was dressed, ready to run down, but the letter called her back ; it would take *only* a moment, and she broke the seal. It might be from her bookseller, for the hand was strange to her. She looked at the post-mark—it was London : an unusual trembling seized her, and with a faint sickness she opened it.

“ Beatrice,” said Susan, opening the door, “ come, we want you. Miss Hammonde says she cannot play *Les Lanciers*, so you must. Come, there’s a dear girl ; do now.”

Beatrice raised her hand, as if to implore her forbearance and silence ; but Susan was just at that moment engaged in settling a few of her sweet curls, and did not perceive the action.

“ So you will come, I know ; you are always very good-tempered, and to-night we want you,” added Susan.



"I will *come*," said Beatrice, steadfastly, and commanding herself to be calm and firm, "in a moment."

"I knew you would. Dear Beatrice, how pale you look! you must not study so much; take my advice now, and——" She ceased speaking, for Beatrice was leaning against the back of her chair for support.

"I am only a little faint," said Beatrice—"do not be alarmed; I have heard something which hurt my feelings; take no notice of me—I shall be better soon—I will play to you immediately."

Susan's eye fell on the letter; but Beatrice, taking it up, opened a drawer, threw it in, and then rising, went down stairs, and played several quadrilles; and no one, to have seen her, would have thought she had heard the intelligence which she had.

To be brief, Henry, after acknowledging his extravagance and dissipation, no longer hesitated to affirm, he was plunged so deeply in debt—and those debts were not college ones alone, but debts of ho-

nour, which he must pay, or forfeit what was dearer to him than life itself. He affirmed he knew not what course to pursue; to his father he dared not apply, for to his last application he had said, in reply—"Henry, this *MUST* be your *last*." "Do not think, my dear Beatrice," said Henry, in his letter to Beatrice, "that I write this to you, under the impression of asking your aid; no, far from it. Your studies injure your health—mine once did, but they will *injure it no more*. I am in a state of feeling I cannot describe, and which I am sure *you* cannot imagine; and my future plans are unthought of. Do not however distress yourself about me, for I shall bring myself, I trust, out of this scrape ere long."

But his sister Beatrice did not think he would "soon bring himself out of the scrape," as he termed it; and it was the concluding sentences of his letter which touched upon her soul, and affected her so sensibly, when Susan entered her room.—"Dear Beatrice, I *MAY* never again see

you. Should that be the case, take my thanks for all your kindnesses. I know what it is to consume your hours in severe application: I was repaid for my studies, by all a student *could* wish—you have toiled for one who must disappoint your warmest hopes—one who is unworthy a thought from you. Yes, Beatrice, there was a time when I could have paused—when I could have ‘cheated ruin,’ now ruin must, in turn, cheat me. Beatrice, no effort of yours CAN save me; and nothing less than a miracle can uphold me. A miracle, I say. Yes—and I aver I mean as I advance.” He then signed his name; but it seemed, ere his letter was finally closed, he added a postscript, which broke out in alarming sentences.—“If you should hear I have committed some rash act, I need not ask *your* forbearance. Man is but man; but yet I hope I am not utterly abandoned. I must preserve myself; and if I can, I will. I *must* pay my debts of honour. Farewell, Beatrice! perhaps for ever! HENRY WYCHELY.”

When Beatrice had finished the epistle, the entrance of Susan had warned her to be calm; and by one of those violent efforts which a naturally strong mind is capable of performing when required, she went down, and endeavoured to enter into the amusements which were going on.

Miss Hammonde complained she was "immensely dull," and wondered what was the matter; whilst two or three others, who were equally penetrating, though more alive to feeling than Miss Hammonde, made no remarks at all, convinced something unpleasant affected Beatrice, into which they had no right to pry.

When the party was gone, and Beatrice had time to reflect, she found the anguish of her mind almost insupportable; she became convinced, from the whole tenour of Henry's letter, he meditated some fatal plunge: his mind was destitute of hope—destitute of all that could control him to act as a MAN—and she beheld him the victim of despair. She lost no time, however, in answering his lines, and care-

fully concealed (as he had commanded her) all that which he had imparted.

The family of the Wycherlys were then too much occupied by preparations for seeing company, and returning visits, to trouble themselves even by thought respecting the silence which Henry evinced towards them: they supposed him (if they supposed at all) engaged in study: and though week followed week, and no letter appeared, they did not apprehend any ill. —“It is odd Henry does not write,” said Mrs. Wycherly, one day, to her husband.

“Ah, it is,” he replied; “but I dare say he is well.”

Beatrice heard these remarks, and she knew not why, but an involuntary shiver darted over her frame: she could not account for its existence, for *she* had heard nothing of Henry for some time, and conjectured that he had surmounted his troubles; and, under that impression, had argued herself into something like peace of mind; but that calmness of feeling was

soon destroyed, by her anxiety respecting his fate. She had written several times, *imploing* an answer—praying to know the worst: and when weeks had passed on, and no reply appeared, she could no longer bear her feelings of agony, but knowing a friend of his at Cambridge, she ventured to implore *him* to tell her the fate of her brother. This friend (a student at All Souls) compassionated the state of her mind, and lost no time in replying to her epistle; but it was far from being either satisfactory or elucidating, being simply as follows:—

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“MADAM,

“I sympathize with your anxiety respecting your brother, of whose pursuits I am now ignorant; as when I parted with him, he told me he was going to return home to Brundale. I am sorry to add, I doubted this at the moment—and your letter of yesterday confirms my suspicions. I apprehend he is in town; but

I have only bare surmise to rest upon. Surely the natural goodness of his heart will prompt him to let you know *where* he is, for he must be aware to what great pain he subjects you and your family. I will do every thing in my power to find out the place of his residence: and further, dear madam, be assured I will exert myself to preserve him from ruin. As a friend, none do I value more, for the 'goodness of heart,' than Henry Wycherly. Earnestly do I wish it was in my power to render your anxiety less: depend on this, and

"Believe me,

"MADAM,

"Your respectful, though unknown friend,

"J. W. PARR.

"*All Souls*, 18—."

A fortnight passed away, and Beatrice was still in grief respecting Henry, and she could not help thinking him unkind in making her the creature of suspense.

It chanced, unfortunately for her, that amusements of many kinds were in promulgation; she could not enter into them with pleasure; and this not only offended her mother, but even the gentle Susan was led to say "how *unaccommodating* she was!"—and she declared she could not enjoy any amusement, when she reflected Beatrice was so solitary at home; therefore Beatrice, to make peace, determined to accompany her the next time an invitation arrived.

It was a rash determination, for Mr. Faulkner, who was ever ready to promote innocent pleasure, gave a ball. Beatrice was invited; and Susan, with some exultation, heard her say she would go. She, in the joy of her heart, gave her some lace for her dress, and advised her to be all spirits and animation; she fixed and refixed the feathers on her head the day of the ball—gaily danced from room to room—and was equipped long before Beatrice was half ready.—"How slow you are!" she said, as Beatrice was dejectedly



putting on her flowers. "Come, make haste: only imagine the quadrilles—the music—the beaux—the belles—the wax candles—all making one look as handsome again as one is. Only fancy, Beatrice—I say, *dear* Beatrice, *me* beginning *Les Graces* with this step; look now."

"I was looking out of the window," replied Beatrice. "There is the servant with the post-bag: I wonder whether there are any letters for me."

"I wonder whether there are any for ME," said Susan, running out of the room; and Beatrice, oppressed with a sudden faintness, could only sit down in her chair, and hold her head with her hand, and finally shed tears of bitter agony.

"There are no letters for you nor for me," said Susan, running back, "only one for my father; so I have ordered the carriage, on purpose that we may not be late. But how is this—you are no forwarder than when I left you to go down stairs!"

"Dearest sister—dear Susan," said Bea-

trice, looking up, and taking her hand, "I can no longer conceal my pain—my mind is so truly wretched; and for some time past I have suffered much. I am indeed a poor and melancholy companion; yet I cannot impart to you the cause of my distress. You will, I am sure, forgive it when you know all."

Susan would have replied; but the waiting-woman, running hastily in for a smelling-bottle, interrupted her—"Some hartshorn for my mistress," she said.

"Is my mother ill?" said Beatrice, rising from her seat.

"Only faint, Miss, a little—reading a letter, Miss," said the woman.

"I MUST go to her!" exclaimed Beatrice, gaining the door.—"Susan, my dear girl, remain where you are—you will know all in time."

A presentiment all was divulged respecting Henry seized her mind, and, scarcely conscious she was without a gown, she hurried down the stairs, and eagerly hastened to the back drawing-room, where

she heard evidences of great emotion from some one within; her hand rested on the lock of the door, but her spirit was not strong enough to endure the pain of an entrance; she pictured to herself the misery of her mother and the agony of her father, and her heart melted as she stood: a sudden hysteric affection, which she knew was from her mother, made her enter the room, and fly to support her; but she did not at the moment perceive how little *she* was calculated to sooth. Her father, with a letter in his hand, was leaning back in his chair, pale, and apparently stricken with the suddenness of some dreadful intelligence, which he seemed scarcely able to bear: her mother was on the sofa, her handkerchief at her eyes, sobbing violently. Neither seemed to regard her entrance, until the carriage rolled up to the door; then Mr. Wycherly, in a voice which was tolerably calm, said—“Order the carriage away. You will not go to the Faulkners’ ball to-night. Yet

I can ring myself." He did so, and gave his commands accordingly.

Beatrice cast her eyes on the letter which he had in his hand, and perceived the characters were *not* Henry's: a fearful alarm then took possession of her mind, that the fatal act was committed, and Henry was not living; and she was obliged to summon all her fortitude to her aid to support her as she said—"Nothing sad—no ill has happened, I hope?" she appealed, by look and manner, both to her father and mother, but each seemed unwilling to speak of what had occurred. At last, unable to endure the suspense, she said again—"Is HENRY well?"

Again she received no reply.

"It is not curiosity which prompts me to speak, or to endeavour to pry into that you do not wish me to know; but I fear for *him*."

"So do I," said Mr. Wycherly, covering his face with his hands. "Go, my child, and tell Susan to come in, and Sawbridge; let them hear the distressing news."

Beatrice obeyed him; and as they sat down, she felt *she* could judge the extent of the intelligence; but Susan, innocent of the coming calamity, said—"Oh, how the Faulkners will wonder why we did not go!"

"Your brother Henry," said Mr. Wycherly, "has left Cambridge some weeks—he has been in town—he is there now.—in prison——" he stopped to take breath.

"*Only* for DEBT," said Beatrice, with great eagerness, "I am sure."

"My children," and the father looked on them so tenderly—so unlike what he usually did, that *they* seemed to feel, "take warning; your brother has forged—and you may guess the rest!"

A mournful silence, only interrupted by tears and sobs, followed this remark; but that silence was broken by the entrance of a servant, with a letter for Beatrice; she tore it open, recognising in a moment the hand of Mr. Parr; it enclosed one from Henry, which she read instantaneously; it was his last farewell to her,



**BEATRICE;**  
**OR,**  
**THE WYCHERLY FAMILY.**

**A Novel.**

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**IN FOUR VOLUMES.**

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**BY**  
**MARY WHITE.**

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'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;  
It pays our hopes with something still that's new;  
Each day's a mistress unenjoyed before;  
Like travellers, we're pleased with seeing more.

**DRYDEN's *Aurengzebe*.**

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**VOL. IV.**

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**1824.**

evinced. It is well known how beautiful is a Russian twilight; it retains the full glowing colour of evening, in one vast condensed and lovely cloud; and the night itself is twilight. In sorrow man does not willingly fly to society; he is apt to prefer solitude, where he can indulge the strength of his grief without fear of intruders: he yields to its power, till the power is spent and faded—till he again can relish friends, whom in his anguish of spirit he has avoided.

Count Bruhl, having refreshed himself, wandered into a small avenue of trees, in which seats were placed for the accommodation of persons who might desire them: they were solitary and deserted; and he sat down, fixing his eyes on the earth, as if overwhelmed with sorrow. His son—his only child, was no more; and the awakened and distempered fancy could only dwell on the event which had plunged him into irreparable distress. Unaccustomed to subdue his passions, he felt stunned by the heavy calamity; for he



was a man on whom religion had made but slight and feeble impression: he could not bear the evil as a man, and sensible of this, he fled from the eyes of the world to bury himself in retirement.

Raising his eyes, he beheld at a distance a young man, sitting in a thoughtful posture, as much involved in reflection as he was: he seemed unconscious where he was, or that any one was regarding him; and Count Bruhl, struck by his manner, approached him. His countenance was pale; and the amber hue of the night served only to cast over it a still more sickly cast: it was one which smote the count with the impression *he* was also miserable.—“Young man,” said he, in the Russian tongue, fixing his eyes on his—“young man, are you in trouble or distress?”

In very bad and broken Russian, the stranger replied—“I am;” and rose up, bowing, as he prepared to go.

Count Bruhl took out his purse, and

with his eyes still fixed on the young man, was selecting some of its contents for his use.—“Stay,” he said, for he was struck with the strong resemblance he bore to his deceased son—“do me the favour of accepting this.”

The stranger was evidently unused to *accept*, for he twice withdrew his hand ere he ventured to take the money.

“Of what country are you?” said the count, in a familiar accent.

“ENGLAND,” said the young man, hesitating.

“England! May I ask what brings you here?”

The stranger was silent.

“At least,” said count Bruhl, “you have some friends—some one to whom you can apply? Your manners bespeak a better rank in life than your dress.”

“I have no friends,” said the stranger; “and, what is worse, am conscious of deserving but very few.”

“I know some English families,” said the count: “I (if you are unfortunate)

may be able to render you some service: tell me your name, and your pursuits?"

"My name is best concealed—my pursuits, I have none; I am here, a desperate wanderer—unknown and unknowing; I am miserable—for I am oppressed with a sense of my own misery, and aware I add to the wretchedness of others."

"You were then here without any means of subsistence?"

"I was here," said the young man, quickly, "without the means of purchasing bread, except what this ring would have purchased me; and the circumstances attending it are so peculiar, I should regret ever to part with it; it was given me, a month since, by a young man whose life I saved."

"That RING!" exclaimed count Bruhl—"Come here, young man—let me look at it. That ring was my son's! Did he not call himself Bruhl?" he added, after a moment's pause.

"He did."

"Then," said the count, in the frenzy

of the moment, "you shall want no more: my son is dead. If worthy, you shall supply his place."

"If *worthy*!" said the young man, compressing his lips together—"I *am not worthy*."

"At least," said the count, after a long pause, "you shall live with me, if you can bear the sorrows of an old and heartbroken man. My carriages are here—come with me to my country lodge—I will ask no questions of you—demand no confidence: there is a home, if you will accept it. I will call you Welitz.—Come—how glad I am I have found you!—you saved the life of my son, and shall be dear to me."

There was a singular air of hurried feeling in the old man's words and manners, bordering on insanity. The impetuosity of his passions had not subsided, or been felled by the loss of his only son. The vivid starts of the heart yet existed; and as Welitz (for such we shall for the future call him) followed the count from the ave-

now, wondering at his haste, he had no time to reflect on the immense advantages likely to accrue to him from this adventure: he foresaw not that, by a system of good and prudent conduct, he might first be the friend—then the adopted son—and lastly, the heir of his benefactor. And the likeness which existed between the dead and the living, was calculated at once to impress the count with a still greater partiality for him.

Count Bruhl, on his way home to the Lodge, made him explain the incident relative to his son—how Welitz dragged him from a watery grave when the boat foundered—swam with him to land—received the ring—and parted from him, never to see him more.—“I was then wandering, I knew not whither,” said Welitz; “and mere chance directed me to the spot where I saw you.”

The old count felt it was fate which had conducted him there, and at the same time in his own heart (as he had few relations, and those people of wealth and sub-

stance) determined to make Welitz, if he was deserving, a man of fortune. He had him instructed in the Russian tongue—the Latin and French he knew; he found him gentlemanlike in his manners—of quick perception—of keen abilities, and good sense: he was melancholy at times—but that count Bruhl attributed to absence from all *his* friends, to whom Welitz had confessed he never dare return. Count Bruhl had never ventured to touch on his curiosity respecting that crime which drove him from his native country; he had promised never to solicit his confidence, and he strictly kept his word.

When the summer season was passed away, and count Bruhl mentioned his wishes of retiring to the capital, Welitz, for a few moments after his knowledge of his determination, testified some uneasiness; he did not, however, refuse to accompany his benefactor, but only expressed his happiness at the place where he then was.

The evening before his departure, count

Bruhl, having in a great measure subdued his regret for his son in the pleasure of diffusing joy to Welitz, and marking with delighted eyes his gradual improvement in the language and manners of his country, seated himself in his study, which overlooked a tall forest, amusing himself by planning a future path of conduct for himself and Welitz to pursue. He saw Welitz, with slow steps, take the path leading to that forest: he was amused by seeing how well he looked in the Russian cloak and cap, and figured to his imagination the sensation he would cause when he was first introduced to the belles in the grand circles of St. Petersburg: he watched him until he saw him enter the forest, and at last totally disappear: he turned to the table where Welitz had been writing, and curiosity prompted him to look at some scattered papers; they for the most part were translations; but one, the sombre diction of which struck upon him most forcibly, was this:—

"*Requiescant in pace*'—Oh, who shall sleep  
With the girdle of guilt around them?  
Oh, who shall open the ponderous gate,  
Where the spirit of evil hath bound them?

"Oh, who shall calm the vision of ill,  
Which tears the heart with its sorrow?  
Oh, who shall the cup of comfort fill,  
And say—there is peace on the morrow?

"Where is the peace that man can feel,  
Whose deeds are foul, and expire,  
Like dying embers—last decay,  
When melts the spirit's fire?"

"You look pale," said count Bruhl to Welitz, on his return from his walk.

"I have been shot at," exclaimed Welitz, throwing himself into a chair: "did you not hear the report of a piece?"

"No; you alarm—you frighten me!" said the count. "I heard nothing—and I have heard no pistol, nor any noise."

"Thank God, I am safe!" said Welitz, shuddering, as a man would who recalls to his mind any extreme scene of danger in which he has been plunged. "I was calmly walking down the path which has been newly cut in the forest, when I saw



a man sitting under one of the trees: on my approach, he covered his face with his hands, and remained as if immersed in thought. Suddenly his activity became perceptible to me; for running past me with incredible swiftness, he discharged a pistol at me, which, unfortunately for him, only grazed my cap." Welitz produced his cap for Bruhl to inspect, and he immediately perceived a small hole in one of the pieces of fur, which stood further projecting than any other.

"You see, my dear Welitz," said the count, "we cannot be too expeditious in our journey to St. Petersburg: but tell me, was this assassin tall or short—and which direction did he pursue—in what was he dressed? for I do not scruple to say to you, I have *almost* as great an interest in your safety, as I had in that of my own son. I only wish this wretch could be secured, for it seems plunder was not his object, else he would have attempted to rob you; and malice is harder to be counteracted than want."

Welitz answered, in some embarrassment—"He was in a Polish cloak, with a red cap. I much wonder you did not hear the report of the piece. He took the direction leading to Smolenski; but from his immense swiftness, I apprehend he will elude pursuit."

"We will however try what can be done," said the count, ordering some of his servants to take the road Welitz had described the assassin as going; and he knew not *why*, but he felt a shade of doubt respecting the truth of Welitz's statement. Not a domestic had heard the pistol—no one but Welitz saw the man—Welitz could only shew a small hole, perforated by a ball in his cap. These things pressed into the count's mind, as Welitz composedly sat down before him: he *did* think him a deceiver—he could not account for this feeling, unless it was, that Welitz wished to impress him with an idea of his courage; and for the rest of that evening, the count and Welitz both preserved a solemn silence.

At length they repaired to the capital, where count Bruhl so reckoned of introducing his handsome Welitz; he already fancied him forming a most advantageous connexion, perhaps with the very woman whom his son had tenderly loved—he fancied him attracting by his converse and winning admiration, by his acute and brilliant understanding.—“ My second son Welitz,” he called him—“ my friend, as well as son;” for he absolutely found him necessary to his comfort and his happiness; and Welitz amused many tedious hours by reading and conversation, and the count openly declared he should make him his heir.

There was still a mystery which overhung Welitz’s former life, which at times disquieted the count—he had fits of severe gloom, and heartfelt uneasiness; and once his benefactor asked if love was the cause? Welitz had smiled with a very peculiar smile, as he said “ LOVE.”

“ Oh no—not love,—” and the bitterness of tone in which he spoke, and the

unfinished sentence, seemed to indicate love could never inflict what he felt and endured.

Welitz never spoke of parents—brothers—sisters—or friends. When count Bruhl at any time had shewn him a list of English names, or given him an English newspaper, he never mentioned a being whom he knew.—“Did you never hear of —— and ——?” the count would often say; and invariably Welitz denied having the slightest knowledge of any of them, though it was evident he sometimes saw things which affected him, and read news to which he was far from being indifferent. Once the count found him with strong marks of emotion in his countenance, and so absorbed by reading some English papers, as to be unconscious of his presence. Welitz had clasped his hands, and called himself “a guilty outcast!—a wretch on the face of the earth!”

“*I am here,*” said the count, awakening him from his impulse of feeling. He took up the paper when Welitz left the

room; but could find nothing which tolerated his agitation; and he was so imperfectly acquainted with the English tongue, as to be but an indifferent translator, and in all probability missed those few lines which touched the heart of Welitz so deeply. One thing he saw; but THAT could not relate to Welitz.—It was—“A free pardon is granted to all, but the perpetrator of that fatal deed which occurred near London some months since, if they will confess where the *actual* murderer is: it is supposed he is in Norway.”

Welitz had been in Norway; but Welitz could never be a murderer; yet why that ghastly fear of detection—that horror of mixing in company, where English people were likely to be—that mystery of birth, adventure, and connexion?

Welitz had received an invitation to a ball, given by count Dolgenucki, to which he had professed an aversion to go. The count had two beautiful daughters—Catherina and Elizabeth. One of them had formerly been engaged to count Bruhl's

son, and had loved him with extreme affection and tenderness; it was a wish of the count's heart, that if it could be accomplished, Welitz would take a prepossession in favour of that young lady; for that purpose he had expressed his admiration of her in very cool terms, such as—"Ah, people make a great fuss about Catherina; but for my own part, I do not see she is so very beautiful—you, Welitz, will judge for yourself." Welitz asked if she were accomplished, clever, and virtuous? Count Bruhl said, he believed she could play—as to her being clever, there Welitz must judge for himself also.

Count Bruhl adopted the most proper method of surprising Welitz into love; he left Catherina to come full upon him in the blaze of her charms—proud in her peerless beauty—luxuriant in rich and blooming loveliness, like a star from a cloud of darkness and gloom. He had often heard Welitz extol a noble and commanding figure—a dignity of brow and manner—he knew too he was far more partial to

auburn than to black hair; Catherina had all these perfections, and, in one word, she was beautiful. Count Bruhl was no less anxious Welitz should make a favourable impression on Catherina; he was ambitious his dress at least should be handsome, and in the extreme of the fashion; and when Welitz was prepared for the ball, he could scarcely help saying—"How admirable you look—how much dress becomes you!" Arrived at count Dolgorucki's house, he took Welitz's arm up the stairs, and led him through a crowd of fashionables to the chair where Catherina sat. He felt disappointed; she was still in deep mourning, such as she had worn when his son first died; she was paler, and thinner; and in consequence of a sprained ankle, was excused from rising to receive company. He was sorry too Welitz would not see her dance, for every motion was graceful; and with his son, she was so envied—so admired a partner; the fine rich auburn ringlets too, which he flattered himself Welitz would admire, were hidden beneath

a fold of crape, so as to hide all the curls, only a band of hair being crossed upon the forehead.

“ Ah!” thought count Bruhl, “ that beautiful coquette Elizabeth will win the day now ;” and to prevent Welitz asking *her* to dance, he whispered him, “ he hoped he would at least sit out and converse with Catherina the two first dances.”

Welitz was not at all averse to this measure, as it gave him an opportunity of partly covering his face with the fold of a curtain near which he was, and at the same time of addressing the lovely creature beside him ; for he considered her lovely, and perhaps felt a respect for one who could mourn in the Russian capital, amid amusements of every kind, for a lover then no more. She was one of those beauties too, which melancholy becomes ; it attracted Welitz to converse with her on subjects apart from dancing and music, or fashions—subjects which required some mind and sense to discuss ; he found her reflective, serious, and calm, viewing things



through a proper and just estimation ; and he was sorry when the dances had terminated, and count Bruhl proposed he should join the next.

“ My dear old count,” said a lovely creature, following Welitz’s benefactor, “ you promised me you *would* dance ; and now I am wanting a partner, you fail in your promises :

Oh, man !—oh, man !  
Who dare believe ye ?”

“ What a sweet voice !” said Welitz, in an under tone of voice to count Bruhl, as the beautiful creature sung it quite unconscious (of course) any one but the count was listening.

“ Yes ;” and before he had time to add “ so has Catherina,” Elizabeth had linked her arm in his, and, with sweet familiarity, was prattling to him of his promises, and his faithlessness, and begging him at the same time to introduce her to the Englishman, whom she heard he had adopted.

Welitz just heard her last words, and

he pressed forward a step or two, that the count might do him the favour of an introduction. The count however drew back, and led Elizabeth to the set then forming.

“Does count Bruhl dance?” said Catherina to Welitz, “or is he gone to give up my sister to a more youthful partner?”

“I believe,” said Welitz, speaking in French, and with some rapidity, “your latter conclusion is right; he has just given her hand to yonder young gentleman.” He had only time to say these words, when he found himself pressed out of the circle formed round Catherina, and therefore he quietly went to the count, requesting him to introduce him to a partner.

“Had you not rather converse with a native of your own country?” said the count to him; “there is a young Englishman lately arrived—I will fetch him to you.”

“Stop, sir!” said Welitz, in much fearful agitation. “Have you not heard his

name?—Can you shew him to me, and yet I not be seen by him?"

"His name—is Aberdeen—there he stands."

Welitz started.

"I just mentioned to him I would introduce him to one of his countrymen," said the count, "and——"

"But not my name!" exclaimed Welitz, in fierce agitation.

"I could not tell him what *I* never knew," said the count, drily.

"I am taken suddenly ill!" exclaimed Welitz again; and rushing to the door, he ran down the stairs, the count following him hastily.

"You wish to go home—I will give orders for the sledge," he said. "Your conduct must excite my suspicion, nevertheless I ask no questions."

Welitz wrapped himself up in his furs, and went home; but the count returned to the room, where he found the young Englishman (Aberdeen) standing close by the flue, warming himself. It was no

difficult matter to touch upon English customs and manners; and so disturbed was count Bruhl at Welitz's agitation, that he considered it no crime to endeavour to divine if he knew any circumstance which could tend to elucidate who Welitz was. He knew not how it was, but his abstracted manners sometimes excited his terror; he looked at him, to endeavour to trace a murderous line in his countenance—but, to his perception, he saw none; and he was perplexed in his mind, by a mystery for which he could give no account.

## CHAPTER II.

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COUNT Bruhl, with some discomforture, reflected it was unfortunate he had given it out Welitz was to be his heir; if he retracted from that vow, he must give some ostensible reason for so doing: he was resolved to press Mr. Aberdeen with ques-

tions, which might tend to elucidate the mystery ; and for that purpose, as we have before stated, he addressed him, as if in a casual way, on the local affairs of his own country, and amongst others he introduced the subject of murder.—“ The English papers,” he said, “ give an extraordinary account of a murder, perpetrated some time since, and offers a free pardon to those who did not actually perpetrate the deed.”

“ Yes,” said Aberdeen, in Russ, “ I remember the circumstances ; the murder took place in 18—, in the winter time—I know the place well where the act was committed, and have been past it twenty times.”

Count Bruhl remembered, with some dismay, it was in the year 18— Welitz came to Russia.

“ The young man who committed the act has a price set upon his head ; I have seen the description of him in the public prints—tall—handsome—dark—and even elegant—had then rather a full face—he is supposed to be concealed in some foreign

country ; perhaps," added he, merely by way of saying something, " he may be here."

" Oh no—that is not very likely," said count Bruhl, feigning a laugh ; " we should soon find him out."

" He escaped in an open boat."

" Do you know his name?" said the count.

" Yes—I did—something—really I forget now—it began with a W. I know there was a great disturbance at the time about a knife found near the spot ; there were several people present, but this young man gave the blow : the man died, and this W—for I cannot for the soul of me remember his name—fled."

" I am yet ignorant of the circumstances attending the murder," said the count.

" Ah, so am I," said Mr. Aberdeen.

When count Bruhl went home, his mind was tormented with a thousand fears. Perhaps he was introducing a murderer to his friends, and perhaps that very young man, whom he had signified to count Dol-

gorucki as being the very person he wished to supply the place of his son in marrying his eldest daughter, was an assassin. He could scarcely reconcile himself to the thought, when the door of the room where he sat was opened, and Welitz entered. He was half dressed, and with a sensation of horror and of *terror*, count Bruhl perceived he walked in his sleep: he seated himself, with his eyes fixed in that strange and awful manner, peculiar to people who are affected with that disease (for such it may be termed), and count Bruhl, breathless, fixed on him also a vivid and staring glance. Welitz was seated just under a tripod, which, with decaying light, threw a sallow and sickly cast upon his features; they, to Bruhl's imagination, were filled with the terrors of a guilty conscience, distorted by fear, and torn by the overwhelming power of thought. Welitz at length raised his hand, and smote it on the side of his seat, saying at the moment—"Down! *down!*" Bruhl

imagined his eyes stretched wider in their sockets, and that his whole system seemed to bespeak he thought himself addressing a something which rose up in judgment against him; the livid ray of the lamp was then playing on his features, and the count perceived a slight trembling agitate his frame. He rose from his seat—for whoever fancied themselves alone with a *murderer*, and did not feel their very heart's blood chill?—he was going to leave the room; but Welitz preceded him, closing the door after him.

The count remained in severe rumination on his own conduct, till his man came to bring him his dressing-gown and slippers, and with a pained and disquieted mind, he went to bed. In his sleep he was pursued by visions, which pictured to him Welitz as the murderer of the Englishman—he saw him in his dreams with his hands bloody, and his face distorted by angry passions, and when he awoke, he could scarcely prevail upon himself that it was not true. He breakfasted alone,

for just then he knew he could not see Welitz with composure and serenity, and on his table he perceived a small ill-folded billet, not sealed, on which were, in red ink, the following words :—"WHAT! *does count Bruhl countenance* MURDER?"

He inquired who brought that billet, and was told no one knew—they were entirely ignorant how any one could have entered that room, as the count's eldest footman had had the key until his master came down. On the other side of the billet, in small characters, was the word—"BEWARE!"

Count Bruhl, we have said before, was not a man of strong mind, and he was so thoroughly persuaded of Welitz's guilt, even from his own manners—his disquieted fancy—his walking in his sleep—and his own feelings, that for several days he refused to see him, under pretence of illness.

Welitz affected (as the count supposed) great astonishment, and at last being con-

vinced something was the matter, he voluntarily presented himself at the bedside, and inquired why he, who had once been the softener of his benefactor's illnesses, should be then excluded from his room entirely?

"I have been unable to see any one," said the count, hesitatingly, "and I knew you employed yourself in visiting Dolgorucki. Dolgorucki has two daughters—you must not think of either of them, Welitz."

Welitz, who was penetrating enough to know it had *once* been count Bruhl's ardent wish he might select either Catherina or Elizabeth, turned pale, and after a slight spasm of agitation, exclaimed—"Since you tell me so, sir, I am bound in duty—that is, in gratitude, to obey; yet I confess—but then why should I confess?—it is useless. But may I ask *why*—*why* you have altered your wishes? I vainly imagined you rather wished me to form an attachment to Catherina; but if it is your pleasure, I never will see her more."

Count Bruhl kept his eyes away from those of Welitz; and after summing up an answer, he at once acknowledged it *had* been his wish; but he had given up the idea, because count Dolgorucki might object to a man whose life had been wrapt in mystery, and who confessed himself guilty of some crime, which darkened the shadow of his happiness—"But that," added the count, "I said nothing about—I merely advanced, you came from England; I had some slight knowledge of your father, and for that reason I noticed and finally adopted you: but I a few days since received a most singular billet—in it was written—'WHAT! *does count Bruhl countenance* MURDER?' This has perplexed my mind, and made me miserable—no one knew who brought it; and were I inclined to believe in the existence of supernatural powers, I might fancy they *had* some interest in placing it before me. Until now I have forbore to name it to you; but I cannot be justified in letting you marry, or even gain the love of Ca-

therina Dolgorucki—a stranger to that crime which drove you from your home.” He paused, and fixed his eyes on Welitz, who was then leaning against the wall in dreadful agitation.—“Give me an answer!” said the count, in fierce agitation.—“Would you have forfeited your life, had you remained in your own country?”

Welitz made no reply.

“Was there not a price set upon your head?”

“I BELIEVE THERE WAS,” said Welitz, in a hollow voice, but one of manly force.

“You believe there was! What was your crime?” demanded the count again.

“One for which I ought to have suffered—one for which thousands have perished! it brought with it other crimes—it——”

“Have you *murdered*?” interrupted the count, hastily.

Welitz threw himself into a chair, covering his face with his hands.

“You confirm my suspicions—my worst suspicions,” said the count. “Sudden an-

ger and intoxication may plead a trifling—but I,” count Bruhl started up from his chair, and seized Welitz by his arm—“ I know your tale !” he exclaimed ; “ do not damn my ears by a repetition ; you have done well to deceive—to veil my suspicions as you have.”

“ Count Bruhl,” said Welitz, “ I told you I had a crime—a fearful crime. I asked not for your bounty—I claimed not your pity—your offers of service to me were voluntary—I have not by servile submission won your regard ; but I trusted to my gratitude, in a small measure, to repay you months of tender kindness—you know my crime, and I see by your manners we must part.”

“ He saved your son,” whispered conscience to the count—“ will you for ever abandon him ?” Drops of perspiration chased down his face, and it was evident some agony of a fearful description had power over his mind ; his eyes now and then were fixed on Welitz, and at others were cast upon the earth.—“ I will grant

you separate apartments from mine," said he, after a long pause—"you shall, in every respect, be treated as my adopted son ; but I cannot make you my heir—to-morrow I shall destroy the will ; but I will provide for you, and keep your secret, for the sake of my son—you shall never appear in my presence, without I expressly desire it—I **MUST** part from you, and this day arrangements shall be made so as we shall not interfere with each other, and I shall assign to the world some reason for my acting thus, which will stifle its suspicions."

Different emotions had appeared in Welitz's countenance as the count spoke—the flash of his dark eye for a moment was discernible ; but he seemed to subdue it into a more composed expression, and to control his momentary frenzy with a power, which Bruhl did not possess.

"Take coffee with me this evening for the last time," said the count. "Whatever you have been to others, you have been as a son to me—I shall expect you at nine," and Welitz left him.

In half an hour, count Bruhl received another anonymous epistle, in a similar hand to the other; it was even more mysterious than that, and contained these words:—"What shall we say of a man, who wilfully closes his eyes, and runs among fearful precipices? or what shall we say of him who warms a scorpion in his bosom? Count Bruhl may ere long (*when it is too late*) repent. Will the murderer's hand, think you, lose its relish for blood? The lion may sooner forget its prey, and the tiger her flesh, than the evil heart of man its inclinations. This is thy **SECOND WARNING!**—thou wilt not live to have a third!"

Count Bruhl looked around, expecting Welitz with a dagger in his hand, for it was evidently him at whom the letter pointed; and he absolutely took down an old sword, and laid it on the table, preparing for a mortal struggle. He a moment after was ashamed of this feeling; but he still left the sword lying there, nor did he

remove it when Welitz entered, and his eyes immediately encountered the sword; nor had he sufficient command over himself to prevent a slight shiver from pervading his frame. Count Bruhl observed this; but, of course, said nothing.

Welitz was the first to speak; and count Bruhl, with some dismay, saw he unfastened his sword from his side.—“Welitz!” said the count, turning pale.

“Sir,” said the Englishman, with something of dignity in his tone, “I feel I know your suspicions. There is my sword”—and he presented it—“do with me what you will; but think not *I*, who have experienced your bounty, your kindness, ever harboured an evil design against you. No—I would perish to preserve *your* life—I would peril my best heart’s blood in your cause. Outcast—wretch as I am, I will be faithful and just to you.”

Welitz felt his voice falter, and at the same moment the count snatched him to his heart.—“You *are* faithful,” he said; “let us live together as we have done.”

For some weeks all passed on well, though it was yet with uneasiness the count saw Catherina Dolgorucki was evidently partial to the presence and attention of Welitz: he, however, preserved a steady course of manners towards her, which could not but convince her, all he said he meant; but he dared not say all he wished. She had assumed a change of dress—and all those rich curls, and that fine shape, was displayed to infinite perfection; and, as a little species of coquetry, we must observe, she for two days wore a natural flower Welitz had given her, in her bosom: but on observing him pleased at it, she tore it in pieces, and threw it away. He wished to converse with her on this, and to ask how he had offended her; but he found no opportunity. Catherina, once again coming forth into the world in “beauty’s power,” was far too much admired to be neglected for a moment; and he heard also, with some dismay, she was beloved by a handsome Russian officer of the court, to whom it was

supposed, with very little persuasion, she would give her affections in return for his.

Her father too, on the officer's application to him, had allowed him full and free consent to pay every attention to his daughter, which might win her from her former love; and whilst Welitz tore himself away from the fatal beauty, Tobolski, a young and polished man, was constantly in her society, and endued with all the graces necessary to win a female's heart.

Catherina was far from being of an obstinate temper, nor one inclined to act against the will of her father; at the same time, she was above coquetry and deceit: she would not willingly give birth to a hope she must inevitably disappoint; and she felt fearful Tobolski might plunge himself into a vortex of unhappiness, by fixing his affections on one who could not return them. But who shall say that the constant society of a man who is deeply attached—one of fascinating and pleasing exterior, shall not make some impression on a woman's weak heart?—* Ice will

melt by constant heat:" and Welitz, expected to hear she was betrothed to Tobolski, with the calmness of a man who must not hope.

"Catherina Dolgorucki," said count Bruhl one day to Welitz, "is to marry Tobolski; her father told me so. It was a good thing you did not fix your mind on *her*."

"Are they to be married soon?" asked Welitz.

"Oh! that I know nothing about,—only Dolgorucki hinted it to me this morning."

"Oh, it was a *hint* only!" exclaimed Welitz, unguardedly. "Perhaps it is not true."

Bruhl lifted up his eyes, and was silent.

In the evening Tobolski stood up behind Catherina's sledge, which was rapidly driving up the ice; and every one considered the marriage as concluded on. Tobolski was in high spirits too, though Catherina seemed more than usually depressed: he had that day extorted from her a vow to be his, and it was natural he

should be more than in spirits; it became a thing of course that he should be *happy*. Welitz left the ice early, and returned home—read till a late hour heavy works, which required his utmost thought and attention, and at midnight he retired to his *room*. He was some time before he undressed himself, and he had scarcely completed that task, when a confused rush, and tumult of voices in the streets, roused his observation: it was not the noise of a crowd merely passing along, such as is common after any place of amusement was closed, but a sudden swell of people, such as rise when any remarkable incident occurs. He heard, in the Russian tongue, cries of—“Hasten! hasten!” On bursting open his window-shutters, he perceived the sky as if illuminated by the rising sun, and from the east it seemed to rise into one large concave of light; a curling flame kept darting its rays upwards, and the place from whence that flame proceeded, he judged was the house of Dolgorucki: he quickly

drew on his clothes, and darted into the street, where he joined a crowd of persons, hastening in that direction—men, women, children, firemen, and buckets, were in one promiscuous mass; and Welitz found himself conveyed almost without effort to the street where the fire was. By the time he reached the house, the flames were raging from all the windows; he did not know which was the room occupied by Catherina; and as he pressed through the immense crowd assembled, he endeavoured to ascertain if any of the family were saved. He learned one of the daughters, and Dolgorucki himself, had been preserved—one was yet in peril—and another moment the sudden appearance of Catherina, at one of the windows, convinced him she was destined to be the victim. A vast column of smoke, arising from water being thrown on the building, for a short space hid her from him; but on its passing away, he distinguished her yet lingering by the window, like a vision, bright, palpable, and clear.—“A ladder—

a ladder can be raised!" exclaimed Welitz, in a frenzy.

"The walls are just ready to fall in, and all the floors are giving way," said a Russian, with an attempt to make a passage for the young Englishman, but which would have proved ineffectual, had not Welitz been endued with that supernatural strength which a man evinces when desperate in his resolves and undertakings. — "I must save her."

His exclamation was heard by many persons, who immediately said—"Ah, that is the lover Tobolski!—pray God he *may* save her! but it seems impossible."

Welitz, however, mounted the ladder, and kept his eyes fixed on those of Catharina's: she stretched out her arms to him, as if imploring him to hasten; and Welitz, amid the shouts of the crowd, brought her down in safety in his arms. The count Dolgorucki could only embrace him with transport; and Tobolski, who just arrived in time to see his Catherina safe, was equally grateful for her deliverance. She

had received only a slight burn on the arm; and Tobolski felt the whole force of the obligation, when he reflected the peril Welitz had been in to save his betrothed wife.

As for Catherina, after this, Tobolski found her oppressed with a heavy melancholy: he attributed it at first to the loss of her jewels, which were consumed; and as there were no means of her ever regaining them, with gallantry and affection he had purchased some as near like them as possible; and one morning she found them on her table (for they had apartments at the palace), in a casket, on which was written—"Tobolski to his destined wife!"

"Oh look, Catherina!" said Elizabeth; "your lover has sent you some beautiful present; the very casket itself is divine—it is sealed—may I just break the seal?"

Catherina replied in the negative, and coldly put them aside, saying—"No, Elizabeth, I will not even look at them."

"Not look at them!" said Elizabeth, surprised.

"No."

"And they are meant for a wedding present, I dare say," exclaimed Elizabeth, in an appealing voice.

"Then I am sure I never will have them," answered Catherina, with some force. "I do not mean to marry Tobolski—I cannot—I should deceive him most grossly if I did; and I shall tell my father I can never have him!"

CHAPTER III.

I would have warn'd thee—but thou wouldst not hear:
I would have warn'd thee by my flowing tear—
By signs—by looks—by letters—and by words;
But thou disdain'd them all———

Manuscript Old Play.

CATHERINA consequently told her father of her resolve. Count Dolgorucki was surprised at his daughter's determination, but not indignant: he was one of those

good fathers who wisely plan for their children's happiness more than for their grandeur. Tobolski, a polished young officer of the court of St. Petersburg, endowed with so many brilliant qualities, was indeed a man he apprehended would have met with no ill reception. Catherina had received his attentions, and accepted his love, but never in a manner which testified it was strongly returned; and since the fire she had been cooler and cooler, till at last, with much pain, she confessed, Tobolski was not a man she ever could love more than a friend.—“I wish you, my dear father,” she said, “would tell him so; and at the same time tell him how much I am distressed at the change—I—I mean the state of my heart: I never meant to deceive; but I cannot marry Tobolski whilst my heart is prepossessed with another.”

“But *he* is no more,” advanced the count—“he is a DEAD object of affection.”

“It is a LIVING object, dear father!”

said Catherina, throwing herself into his arms.

“Then it is Welitz,” said the count, pressing her to his heart. “My child, I have observed his attachment—I have observed his struggles to conceal it: I know Bruhl will not object; and it is my fervent wish my child may be happy. But my brave Tobolski, I pity him.”

“But you, my dear father,” said Catherina, in tears, “will pacify his mind; and he will not surely long regret a woman who could not love him: you will persuade him to forget me; for I was never worthy his love.”

Count Dolgorucki, however, had great difficulty in persuading Tobolski Catherina could never be his: he could scarcely believe what was so dissonant to his wishes, and he staggered under the news, as one who feels a thunderbolt burst over his head. His heart immediately suggested some fortunate rival's powerful influence, and he could not help telling count Dol-

gorucki, he apprehended such to be the case.

“ You are not right in that conclusion,” said count Dolgorucki: “ no rival has endeavoured to gain her love. Welitz, the adopted son of count Brühl, her deliverer from the fire, which happened at my house, is the man she prefers: but he has never sought to estrange her love from you: he has endeavoured, by every means in his power, to conceal it; and I assure you, my daughter’s preference for him, he is at this moment totally ignorant of.”

“ At least,” said Tobolski, with some generous emotion appearing in his countenance and manner, “ Catherina will not pain me by returning those jewels which I yesterday had conveyed to her room, with a wish of her acceptance of them: let her keep them; and since I may not be her lover, let her wear them for my sake as a friend !”

The count and Tobolski parted friends. Catherina was persuaded to take the jewels; and Dolgorucki had then only to

break the matter to Bruhl. It was one which required some delicacy, and one which so far involved the feelings of his daughter, as made him careful how he went upon the subject altogether.

Once closeted with count Bruhl, Dolgorucki broke the ice; but how was he chagrined to find him so far from entering into the affair with any thing like pleasure—change countenance, and raise every possible obstacle to the projected attachment!—"Welitz saved Catherina's life; and as there is a mutual regard existing, I think it would be nothing less than cruelty to separate them," said Dolgorucki.

"Yes—but Welitz is an Englishman," advanced Bruhl.

"Not the worse for that," said Dolgorucki again.

"No; but he left his country under circumstances of a peculiar nature—a VERY peculiar nature; and there is a mystery which I cannot develop—nor will be—which overhangs his actions; and how can I justify myself in permitting him to

marry into a family so noble as yours, without being able to say what was the crime for which he left England? Yes, my friend, it was a CRIME!"

"How has he passed his time—in what pursuits, since he was *here*—and if you suspect him of a FOUL crime, why do you make him your adopted son, and your heir?" demanded Dolgorucki.

To this interrogation Bruhl could only say—"He has always conducted himself as he ought; and it was for your sake, and that of your daughter, I kept him so much away from her. He loves her; and I think him *now* a repentant man; yet when one reflects upon marrying one's child to a person guilty of a *crime*, and that one of—I mean one we do not know of, it seems an alarming hazard to run. If you consent he *should* have your daughter under these circumstances, that same hour I *declare* him my heir—for I love him."

Count Dolgorucki was for a moment silent: at last he desired a short time for

reflection, and an interview with Welitz, which was immediately granted. He justly considered count Bruhl could not "love" Welitz, unless he had *some* estimable qualities, besides those of mere conversation and fascination. He had had time to investigate the heart, and analyze the mind. Man was but man. In the heat of youth, and the predominance of passion, he *might* have been guilty of some crime; but Bruhl said he was a "repentant man;" and if a human being erred, all they could do *was* to repent. Catherina had been saved from inevitable destruction by Welitz—Catherina also loved him; nor was it wonderful she should do so. All these things passed into Dolgorucki's heart, as he was awaiting the entrance of Welitz, in a small room peculiarly appropriated to his use: it was furnished with only two chairs, a writing-table and desk, after the English fashion, and a ~~flue~~ *flue*: books, in the English language and Russian tongue, were placed in shelves around it, and one laid upon the table, as if it had

been recently perused. Welitz was longer than count Dolgorucki apprehended; and to beguile the moments of his stay, he opened the English volume, at a part which forcibly chained his attention to it. —“Whoever shall aver, when he commits one crime, that it shall not extend to many more—that it shall not expose him to the danger of falling still deeper into the jaws of sin, argues as a madman and a fool. The man who plans to waylay his fellow-man, with an intent ONLY to rob, is not aware but that peculiar circumstances may not make him add MURDER to theft.”

Count Dolgorucki perceived this passage had been *read* and *re-read*—it was marked with a pen; and in a hand very much resembling Welitz’s, a small note was added, of no peculiar import, but one which related to the passage in question, and he was engaged in reading it when Welitz entered. Common salutations having passed, the count opened his embassy, by inquiring if Welitz had not a prepossession

in favour of some Russian lady. The evident confusion into which he was thrown by this question, generated in Dolgorucki's mind a mixture of delight and self-satisfaction; and with great pleasure he said he was commissioned by the count Brawl to demand who it was, that proposals might be made in due form, if the lady was disengaged.

"The being whom I do love," said Welitz, with some degree of agitation, "is placed at a distance from me by two insuperable barriers; *her* heart is engaged—and her family noble and illustrious."

Dolgorucki kept his eyes fixed on the changing countenance of Welitz, with a steadfast and penetrating glance, and was not surprised to see the workings of disappointed affection in his face and manner.—"I know this being," said the count—"do not be alarmed; it is CATHERINA DOLGORUCKI; she has relinquished Tobolski, for you."

"For *me*!" said Welitz; and a pale flash of frenzy darted across his face—"for

me!—but”—and his voice became hurried—“ *I am not worthy of her; though I solemnly swear, I love her more than I can express, and that the whole of my life shall be passed in conducing to her happiness; that from the first moment I saw her, I adored her; yet, will she not relinquish me, when she reflects on the mystery—the——*”

“ She and I have waved that,” said Dolgorucki, smiling. “ Count Bruhl makes you his heir. I shall give her a marriage portion suitable to her rank, and may God make you happy !”

Welitz appeared too much overjoyed to be capable of expressing himself; and the count having told him he should expect him to supper that evening, left the house.

It was but natural to suppose Welitz should overwhelm his benefactor with expressions of grateful affection; that he should call him his more than father—his friend—his preserver—him from whom he dated all his happiness; and it was not

less natural to suppose Welitz should, with feelings far beyond our powers of description, array himself in the most becoming dress to visit Catherina, and at an early hour he set off in his sledge for the palace. He had figured to himself his first meeting with her—her blushes—his own delightful feelings; he figured to himself also, her exquisite loveliness, her winning gracefulness, and still more charming conversation.

Proceeding rapidly along, he was already within a short distance of the palace, when his sledge was stopped by a man in prince Menzikoff's livery.—“Is this the young count Welitz?” said the interrupter to Welitz's servant.

Welitz's attendant said, it was.

“Then he is immediately wanted at the Orlow Hotel, by his friend prince Menzikoff's son.”

Welitz, who heard the invitation, seemed unwilling to be delayed, and asked the man if another time would not do, as he was then engaged, and could not conve-

niently comply with young Menzikoff's wishes.

The servant said, his master had commanded him to add, count Welitz would not be long delayed; for that purpose he had sent him with his sledge and swift horses.

"Go on to the palace—to count Dolgorucki's apartments," said Welitz to his footman—"say I shall be there in an hour;" and getting into Menzikoff's sledge, he was driven down the street with the greatest rapidity.

The night was more than usually dark, and most of the lamps, from a high and driving wind, were out, except those near to the palace, which were screened from its fury by a high wall. Catherina had expected her intended lover even some time before his servant arrived with the message. She passed the hour in all the tumultuous anxieties of joy, timidity, and fear: it passed, but Welitz came not—another winged its slow course, but still no Welitz came; she repeatedly appealed

to the watch she wore—to the cathedral clock—but time went calmly on, bringing no lover; and unable to conceal her anxiety, she retired to her own room, which overlooked the street to some considerable distance. A foot passenger, as if waiting for some one, was leaning against the portico of a house near; his figure resembled that of Tobolski, and she was so persuaded it was he himself, she twice opened the sash to speak; but observing her, whoever it was glided on, looking back to see if *he* was seen, and at last, amid the gloom, totally disappeared. She could not account for the feeling which made her so restless and uneasy; and agonized by fears for the safety of her lover, she privately dispatched a domestic to the Orlow Hotel, to know if Welitz was there. Answer came back, he was.

The night, however, passed by, and Welitz did not visit his Catherina.

Count Bruhl, at an early hour the next morning, was at the ——— palace, and presented himself at the breakfast-table of

Dolgorucki, just as they were sitting down: his countenance was troubled and dismayed.—“We did not see Welitz,” said Dolgorucki, who was impatient to know the cause of his delay, “last evening.”

“He did not reach home till late, and he has entreated me to make his excuses. Young Menzikoff and he were at the Orlov Hotel—the fact is, I believe they drank hard: it was not young Menzikoff himself, but a friend of his. It is a complex business altogether; and Welitz has a headach, and is ashamed of being decoyed from you.” He turned to Catherine as he spoke, in whose crimsoned cheeks he saw a feeling of mortified pride and indignation. That any thing could seduce him away from her at the very time when he was to declare his passion, and knew he should be secure of success, was at once incomprehensible and strange; and she could not easily accommodate to her mind any excuse Welitz might frame.

Welitz appeared himself in the course of the day, and, as he expected, he found

all the Dolgorucki family cooler, and more distant than they had ever been before; he found himself also uncomfortable and perplexed; and he feared (such were Catherina's manners), that as woman is quick and resentful in what regards her pride, her love, and her native and inherent dignity, she might eventually refuse him. He judged wrong in this idea: Catherina was forgiving, though the case was aggravated, and readily consented to hear the excuse Welitz made.

"I was no sooner in the sledge," said he to her, after he had named the rencontre with Menzikoff's servant, "than I found myself driven with great swiftness to the Orlow Hotel. Menzikoff, I was told, was in a room waiting for me: on entering that room—I think it was number seventeen—I saw no one but Howitzer, who, you know, dear Catherina, is a friend of Menzikoff's, and a distant relation of count Bruhl: we exchanged a few words. Howitzer had a few questions to ask concerning my benefactor, and I as readily an-

swered them. We passed nearly five minutes, or it might be more, together, when I began to be impatient for young Menzikoff's appearance. Howitzer, to whom I was personally known, and whom I always felt a friendship for, asked me to taste some wine he was drinking. I did so; it had a most remarkable effect on me; I grew thirsty, giddy, and intoxicated; I drank hard, I dare say; for I do not remember seeing young Menzikoff at all—nor, in fact, any thing which passed, until the waiters led me home to count Bruhl's. The air refreshed me, and I seemed capable of bringing to my mind the events of last night; and, believe me, the agony of my mind was most exquisite, in reflecting I had in all probability lost you for ever."

Catherina imagined Welitz had not imparted the whole of his tale, as there was an embarrassment in his manner, which she thought testified something was yet concealed; she, however, consented to re-

ceive him as her lover, and all seemed restored to happiness. Howitzer was considered as the chief offender; and as none so easily forget injuries as those who sincerely love, Catherina had nearly forgotten the circumstance; when it pleased count Bruhl, in honour of the approaching marriage, which was to have been solemnized in the summer, to give a masked ball to his friends and acquaintances. As it was the last he meant to give before that period, count Bruhl determined that it should excel in every way. Catherina presided at many of the decorations; and it was her hand which arranged the orange flowers and myrtles so tastefully in the ball-room: it was a season of delight, and of hope; the bustle of preparation—the hurry of congratulation—the invitations accepted, and others refused—the joy of choosing characters, and fancying what would be done when those characters were embodied, was at once pleasing and delightful. Catherina looked what she was—happy: it is true, now and then a shade

of regret dwelt in her bosom, to think Ferdinand Bruhl—he who had once led her through similar gaieties—he who was once more dear than life itself, was then no more—the form of manly grace, which from her earliest childhood she had respected—the voice, to which all others had once been untunable, was then never to be heard more.

The evening came; Elizabeth, with whom nothing was a task which came in the shape of pleasure, had chosen the character of an Italian singer—Catherina wore a green domino—Welitz was also in a domino; and at half-past ten most of the visitants were arrived. Welitz, who found himself incessantly troubled with a cough, knew Catherina would recognise him by it; and proposing to change masks with some of his friends, that he might deceive her, at eleven quitted the room, followed by Janoski, a particular and intimate acquaintance: they went into an anteroom, and finding themselves alone, unmasked, and exchanged dominos. On attempting

to quit the anteroom, they found themselves fastened in, and it was not until some time afterwards, amid the music, and personification of the different characters, they could be liberated.

Welitz looked around for the green domino, but she was nowhere to be seen; and seating himself in one of the alcoves, he awaited patiently the entrance of her whose absence he had most occasion to regret. Finding that she did not appear, he engaged a lady for a dance then forming—imagining she was gone also to change her domino to surprise and mislead *him*.

Catherina was differently employed: as soon as he left the ball-room, a black mask came, and stood so pointedly before her, that she was under the necessity of moving from the place where she was. The black mask still followed, and at last seated himself by her, yet did not speak; and Catherina, awed by his manner, dared not utter a word. It seemed as if the mask affected her with nerveless emotion, for she wished to quit the spot; yet her

heart chilled and sunk within her, and the mask, with folded arms, continued to fix his eyes on hers.—“ You are near your marriage, are you not ?” he at length said, in a voice of hollow dread, and which Catherina deemed was one of masquerade only.

“ I believe so—yes,” she replied faintly.

“ Do you know where you have seated yourself ?” said the mask.

“ Yes;” and she endeavoured to assume an air of cheerfulness, which she hoped to impart to her companion ; “ just under a bough of an orange-tree, which I helped to put up myself this morning.”

The mask raised his arm, and gathered one of the flowers—kissed it, and then would have given it to Catherina, but she refused it, saying at the moment—“ I am betrothed, and cannot receive it.”

“ You WERE betrothed,” said the mask, casting the flower down. “ Have you entirely forgotten—entirely obliterated Ferdinand from your memory ?—and may not him you mean to marry, if another comes,

be as easily banished as he was from your mind?"

Catherina now imagined it was Tobolski; and she felt the more inclined to leave the place where she was situated, for she felt she had injured that brave and generous young man; she rose—but the mask rose also, and Catherina shuddered beneath his touch, she knew not why.

"Stay," said the mask. "Are you sure you shall be faithful in this last choice?—for you have had three lovers—and are you sure you will never again alter?"

"If the charnel-house gives not up its dead, I am Welitz's bride," she replied.

The mask made no reply; but lifted up a small curtain, and discovered to Catherina a full-length portrait of Ferdinand Bruhl, in the pride and bloom of manhood, which count Bruhl had given particular orders on that night should be removed from the spot; but his request had been neglected. Catherina turned pale; but that the mask was unable to see, she being thickly veiled. He was again going to

address her, when an old prophet, in an emerald-coloured tunic and embroidered vest, seized her by the arm, and drew her aside—"Expose thy palm, and let me read thy doom," he said; and on her pushing up her full sleeve, he gazed for some time intently on it, and at length, in pure Russian, *recited* the following lines:—

PREDICTION.

"By the line of life, I see
 Little joy is marked for thee!
 By the line of love, I know
 Thou must suffer pain and wo!
 Here are crosses—sorrows—care—
 Trouble, which thy heart must share.
 Blood will flow ere thou'rt tied—
 Blood will flow ere thou art bride!
 Beware a viper in thy way,
 And trust to all the sibyls say.—
 Him thou lov'dst with tender love,
 Is far from thee in Heaven above!
 Him thou turned with scorn from thee,
 Shall wrest thy soul from misery.
 He who now thy love possesses,
 Seducing thee with fond caresses,
 Will prove a wretch! then, ere too late,
 Maid—awaken from thy fate!"

These words made a great impression upon Catherina ; and she was insensible that the prophet had left her, when Welitz, in his borrowed domino, came near to her.—“ Your father, my Catherina,” he said, “ is taken ill in a distant part of the room—he wants your assistance—I am come for you to hasten to him, and I fear it is a mental illness, more than a bodily one.” Welitz drew her arm within his, and was going, had not the same oracle, who had been expounding to Catherina, caught him by the hand—“ I cannot stay now,” said Welitz, snatching it away from his grasp—“ I am in haste.”

“ THOU SHALT STAY, WHEN NEXT I WISH THEE !” said the prophet ; and Welitz, with those words ringing in his ears, led Catherina to a sofa, on which Dolgorucki lay.

As soon as he saw his daughter, he desired to be left alone ; and then taking her arm, he went into one of the antirooms, where, exhorting her to be calm, he said

he had received some intelligence, which he wished to communicate to *her*.

Overcome by a variety of emotions, and stupified with a sense of heavy dread, she could only say—"Tell me, my father, for the most dreadful account you can give me is scarcely so bad as this horrible suspense, to whom does this intelligence relate?" for, with natural fear and turpitude, she could not help bringing to her mind what the prophet had said.

"To Welitz," replied Dolgorucki.

"Then tell me!" she exclaimed, anxiously, and with an eager voice.

"My Catherina," said Dolgorucki, "you must be calm—read that, and then tell me if your father has not erred, in countenancing the love of a man, whose fate, past and future, was involved in mystery and darkness?"

Catherina took a small billet, which her father put into her hands, and read—

"COUNT DOLGORUCKI,

"Before the marriage of your

daughter is solemnized, does it not behove you to inquire into the conduct of her intended husband? The knot once tied, can never be unloosed; look to his hands, if there be not blood upon them! DID NOT FERDINAND BRUHL DISAPPEAR SUDDENLY?—DID NOT THIS WELITZ SWEAR HE HAD ONCE SAVED HIS LIFE, AND PRODUCE A RING, WHICH HE SAID WAS GIVEN HIM? INFAMOUS IMPOSTOR! Can you give the lovely Catherina to a man like this, who the very night he was to have addressed her, and sought her love, was revelling in another part of the city? How well he can feign—how well he can dissemble, when count Bruhl's fortune and count Dolgorucki's daughter are the prizes! Beware then, and take warning before it is too late!"

"Oh, my father," said Catherina, falling on her knees, weighed down by a dim sense of misery and distraction, "he cannot be a murderer!—he cannot be a de-

ceiver! Shew him the letter—let him trace the hand, and find out the abandoned writer.—Welitz, Welitz, I can never think so ill of thee, unless thy own lips confess it!”

Dolgorucki raised her in his arms—
“ My darling child!” he said, “ we will deal openly with him; yet my mind mis-gives me.—I remember once——”

“ But you do not think him a murderer?” said Catherina, with her eyes fixed on her father’s. “ Oh, *you* the best—the most generous of parents, will not condemn unheard!”

“ My child,” said Dolgorucki, “ you rave. Welitz shall tell us his crime, and if it be not murder, we will forgive it: he has left his native land under circumstances of mystery, and it is our duty to inquire, and he must reply, or forfeit your hand and heart. You shall not enter the ball-room again; but I will make some excuse for your not joining the masks; but amongst so many, you will never be missed. God bless you, my love!”

Catherina, convulsed with terror at her own impending fate, left her father, her eyes streaming with tears ; but Dolgorucki assuming an air of composure, entered the ball-room, where he seated himself in one of the niches approximating to the orange wreaths, and fell into a reverie on the mystery of Welitz's connexions and conduct.

CHAPTER IV.

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His thoughts were only interrupted by the following converse—"A very gallant lover," said a young Turk, who was standing by Dolgorucki's back, apparently in deep conversation with another mask ; "but, upon my honour, he is a lucky fellow, to marry, or have the promise of the beautiful Catherina, and count Bruhl's fortune."

"Very fortunate indeed," said another

mask, in whose voice Dolgorucki easily ascertained Howitzer's. "As you were observing, a very gallant lover, to be drinking when he ought to have been at his mistress's feet; he can drink deep, and play deep too; we played that night we were at the Orlov Hotel; but he drank hard to stifle his feelings, for he lost most famously."

Dolgorucki listened with great attention.

"A pretty quandary he must be in the next morning with respect to his mistress," said the Turk.

"Yes; but he was forgiven, and they are soon to be married. Look, there he stands! I know him, though he has exchanged dominos with Janoski."

Dolgorucki heard nothing more which interested him, nor was he sorry when, one by one, the masks disappeared, and all the bustle of the grand ball was over, and he found himself once more at his apartments in the palace. He read and re-read the billet he received, nor could he help re-

flecting on the strange manner in which it had been given him. Whilst he was watching the dancers, and endeavouring to guess at the various persons who were forming that motley group, he felt a hand in his bosom; he turned hastily round; but at that moment a sudden pushing of some more characters, ambitious of being amongst those who were tripping it on the "light fantastic toe," hid the person who had thrust the billet into his breast from his view.

At the first opportunity he read it, and as he called many circumstances to his memory relative to Welitz, he began to feel suspicious of him. Bruhl had appeared too, less sanguine in the marriage than he had imagined—he had made it known Welitz was to be his heir—he had hinted he was a repentant man—a man who seemed to experience agonies of remorse, and what should bring that forth but crime—the commission of fearful and terrible crime? The thing itself admitted of no delay—Welitz must be questioned, and

Welitz must confess; and in the morning Dolgorucki determined to have an audience with him, to demand an explanation, and be certain of an event, which must either set the marriage aside, or only confirm its happiness. Immediately on his return he wrote Welitz, to ask him to breakfast, and commanded the note to be carried that night, that Welitz might have no engagement to prevent his waiting on him. Welitz was up, and received the note—answered and accepted it.

Catherina, after getting into her sledge, and wrapping herself in her furs, was driven home to the palace. A stunning sense of misery seemed opening upon her—Welitz guilty of murder, was a thing she knew not how to tolerate or believe; yet at times the strange depression of his conduct—his absence—his visible dejection when people spoke of England, all rung in her mind. She did not retire to rest; but, divesting herself of her ornaments, she dispatched her woman from her room, and seated herself by the win-

dow : it opened into the palace gardens, and moving her light from the table, she for some time amused herself by looking down into them. After the wild tumult of a heated room—the crush and confusion of motley masks—the incessant gaiety of music, it was a relief to compose the mind, by watching the palace gardens at moonlight ; all was so still, so serene, and beautiful—“ distance made more sweet” by mistiness and gloom, and all in soft-clouded beauty, tended to compose a mind, tortured with so many doubts, and agitated by so many fears.

Catherina had one of those noble faces, which remind us of that antique style of Greek beauty, which is now so rare ; thought renders such a countenance more expressive than her smiles, and stamps it at the same time with dignity and expression—it was untouched by colour, and seemed a model of perfection, just risen from the chisel of the artist.

She was somewhat surprised to observe a man in one of the walks of the garden :

he seemed in agitation—alike influenced by contending emotions as she was, and she was distracted from her own grief by watching the effect of his; he saw her, and evidently avoided her glance: from his figure and height, she judged it was Tobolski.—“I will speak to him,” she said to herself, and for that purpose she opened the window. The rays of moonlight fell on her face, the bold outline of which never looked more beautiful.—“My dear friend Tobolski!” she exclaimed, convinced it was he.

The individual raised his head.

“Why do you wander in these gardens, when you ought to be at the masquerade?”

“Every thing to me has been masquerade,” said the figure: “I have not taste for such things, when you are not there; it was you who——”

“Tobolski,” said Catherina, gently, “come to this window—tell me candidly and truly, have you ever heard aught against Welitz, my destined husband?”

The figure was silent.

“ My happiness depends on knowing,” she added.

“ If the charnel-house gives not up its dead, you will have him ; BUT if it SHOULD GIVE up its dead,” said Tobolski, and Catherina immediately knew him as the black mask—“ what then ?”

“ Of course my vows to Ferdinand Bruhl should be renewed ; far above all others in the world—far beyond Welitz, is the love I bore to him—my virgin vows were his—the first tender emotions of my bosom he raised. But why bring scenes to my memory it were better far to forget ?”

“ Good night !” said the figure, quickly ; and he sprang from the walk, at the same time letting fall a letter—“ good night !” and he disappeared.

Catherina’s woman was retired to rest, and she was unwilling to disturb her. The letter lay upon the grass : from the balcony, which fronted her window, were some steps, which had been occasionally used to



descend from it into the garden; the letter she desired to gain; and looking cautiously round, she descended into the garden, and had already taken it up, when Tobolski again came back.—“ This is what I wished,” he said, clasping his arms round her—“ do not scream,” he said, “ but look upon me !”

A gush of moonlight streamed full upon his face, which was then unmasked.

“ It is—Ferdinand—Ferdinand Bruhl !” and Catherina could only fall into his extended arms.

\* \* \* \* \*

Welitz arose early the next morning, that he might visit Dolgorucki, and have some conversation with him. Getting into his sledge, he was driven immediately to the palace, where he alighted, and ran to the room where the family usually breakfasted. No one but Dolgorucki was present, and on his brow was a mixture of care, trouble, pleasure, and anxiety.

“ Have you heard any particular news ?” asked he of Welitz.

"No—none, my dear count."

"Nothing which must relate to yourself?"

"Nothing.—Is Catherina well?" added Welitz, after a slight pause: but count Dolgorucki took no notice of the question.

"No stranger last night at the masquerade pursued and asked you questions of your affection for my child?"

"Yes: in the beginning of the evening, I chanced to be standing by the door, and a black mask came brushing past me so roughly, that I testified some degree of resentment; I demanded what he meant, and attempted to seize him; but he said the offence was unintentional, and he entreated my pardon."

"And do you not know," said count Dolgorucki, with a solemn voice, "that mask is count Bruhl's only son?"

"Impossible!" said Welitz, with such an expression stealing over his face, as made Dolgorucki shudder.

"It is true: it had been my intention this day to have demanded of you the se-

cret of your past conduct; but as count Bruhl tells me you have always shrunk from the communication of it, I spare you, and will candidly inform you, my daughter—my Catherina, will now renew her vows and love to Ferdinand: had she ever expected his return, she would never have misled you: but had not this occurred, in all probability *you* would never have possessed her, for your crime is of magnitude. Look up, Welitz, and tell me whether the hand of justice is not over your head?—whether you are not for ever banished from your native land, in consequence of the commission of that crime?”

Welitz bent his eyes on the count's with a saddened and fierce expression; but did not attempt to reply.

“Your fate seems hard,” said Dolgorucki; “you have buoyed yourself up, and been buoyed up too, by fallacious hopes, and I pity you.”

“Cannot you consider it the just infliction of crime and punishment?” said Welitz, in a hoarse voice.

“ I can most readily do so, when I consider you a man of guilt. This letter here accuses you of MURDER.”

“ Of murder!” and an ashy paleness spread itself over Welitz’s countenance, as his eyes encountered the billet Dolgorucki held in his hand.

“ Yes.”

“ Count Dolgorucki,” said he, after a moment’s suppression of speech—for he could not at the moment command his utterance—“ my crime I will never confess, judge of me as you will—think of me as you may. Is it not sufficient I am hurled from all the delights hope could bring to my view? I must now relinquish *HER* who I prefer infinitely in competition to count Bruhl’s fortune; yet, when she is happy in the arms of another, and I am far away, experiencing the vicissitudes of reckless fortune, let her remember me with pity and with friendship: I will not trust myself in her presence; but will leave the city, where the MURDERER will not offend *you*, nor molest *her*.”

“ You admit yourself guilty of that horrid crime?” exclaimed count Dolgorucki.

“ I confess I——”

“ Count Bruhl,” said a servant, opening the door; and Welitz observing him accompanied by a tall and handsome stranger, and knowing it to be the young count, hastily left the room, proceeded quickly to his benefactor’s house, and in half an hour had written and given to him the following letter:

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“ I congratulate my more than father on the return of his son once again to him: were it not for some circumstances, I should rejoice as much as *he* possibly could—I do heartily wish him every happiness, and feel almost tranquilized, when I reflect how pleasing it must be to find himself restored to his father and his Catherina. For all your past kindnesses—for all the hospitality I have received at your hands, I cannot express

myself sufficiently to thank you; wherever I may go—in whatever station I may be thrown, the kindness I have had will never be effaced from my memory. Yes, my benefactor, I must leave you; but I leave you in happiness, and that ought to compose me, and it SHALL. When you receive this, you will justly think I am incoherent and unsatisfactory in my writing; but the hour which restores you to a son, deprives me of a beloved bride. I will do nothing rashly—I will not madly fly from St. Petersburg, before I have thanked you again and again for your fatherly tenderness over me.—Who but yourself would have taken in a being, girt with mystery, and outlawed for crime? These things melt my soul to grief, and I scarcely dare trust myself in your presence. Venerated count Bruhl,

“ I am your faithful and grateful

“ ———— ”

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A sudden shout in the street drew Welitz to the window—it was the voice of

joy—of acclamations and triumph. A sledge, surrounded by persons of all orders and ranks, was driven up to the house, and from it stepped Catherina and Ferdinand, who, when Welitz looked out, was that moment clasped to his father's heart. In the confusion of pleasure, and the unexpected resurrection of Ferdinand Bruhl, Welitz was forgotten.—Catherina too, with joyful steps and animated countenance, was welcoming home her faithful lover, regardless of what Welitz might feel; and with a pale and frenzied countenance, he started from the window, that he might not behold *their* joy.

It was not long before he found some one was attempting to enter his room; but the door being fast barred, precluded them from doing so. He asked, somewhat impatiently, what they wanted, and reply was made, that the domestic only brought a small note from count Bruhl to him. Welitz, on hearing that, opened the door, and took it in.—It contained these words:—

“ I have read your letter, Welitz, and have shewn it to my son. He has requested me to implore you to come down and join us: he remembers you as the being who saved his life, and will greet you with open arms. If you will stay with us, you shall be treated as my son, and I will provide for you: but do come down to us, and you will oblige,

“ F. S. BRUHL, senior.”

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But Welitz was too much alive to the cruel feeling of jealousy, to be able to enter the presence of Catherina; and had count Bruhl for a moment paused to reflect, he would have known it was not so easy for a lover to see the “ eyes once filled with answering kindness,” concentrating all their rays on another, and view, with unimpassioned heart, the change which only a few hours wrought.

“ But yesterday, and he could boast  
A world of pleasure in his view;  
To-day—and *all* was fled.”



If he was ambitious, and had reckoned upon the allurements and advantages of count Bruhl's wealth, his hopes were blasted there—if he truly loved, how could he bear to see Catherina torn away from him? She had surely not thought of him when she entered the house where he was—*she* had not surely sincerely loved him, else would she, with strange haste, have thrust herself into his presence with a more favoured lover? He had not been favoured with a single line from her; *she* had expressed no sorrow at his disappointment—no grief at causing him misery; and with sentiments of regret, were mingled pangs of pride and indignant feeling.

There were music and dancing in the house that night; but he declined all invitations to join the gaiety, shutting himself up in his apartment, where he resigned himself to long hours of bitterness and thought. Visions passed before his imagination of his own country—parents abandoned—friends long since remembered; home, with all its innocent peacefulness—

its calm content—its domestic happiness, gushed into his mind.—“It is thus,” he exclaimed, striking his hand on the table, in a frenzy, “I must perish! The God of Heaven, in his avenging power—but I rave—I *will* be calm.” He took a letter from his bosom, and, with deep interest, perused its contents, till tears of agony started from his eyes. The reflection of an opposite mirror revealed to him his paralyzed countenance, torn by a thousand emotions, and made him start from the spot with a feeling of disgust.—“Let Catherina go,” he said, “and be happy with her lover! let her contrast his graces and mine! if they are to marry”—his teeth clenched with frightful violence together—“and he is to be what I fondly thought was my happy fate—to press her to his heart, to say CATHERINA, THOU ART MINE—mine for ever! then do they think I can live to see it?—oh! do they imagine I have no soul?”

“I know,” said a voice behind Welitz, “thou hast a soul; and had you not an

arm for help, and a heart to save, when you dragged me from death in the ocean?"

He turned quickly, and beheld Ferdinand.

"Do you think," he continued, "*I* can forget that? No, Welitz—for such is the name you are termed—you shall be my brother—my friend—and live with us as such for ever."

Welitz staggered beneath the surprise he felt; and his own private feelings, and for a short time could only listen as the young count spoke.—"You shall, if you please," he said, "leave St. Petersburg; for I guess your feelings by what I am sure my own would be in the same situation; and I trust you will do that which is most comfortable to yourself. I have not sought you until now, because I knew you could not enter into cheerfulness at present; and that all this music and dancing was but irksome and distressing to you. But you *must* allow me to call you friend and preserver!"

Welitz held out his hand, and Bruhl

pressed it tenderly within his own; but at the same time Welitz might have been observed to turn pale; and it is ever a symptom of dismay when that change takes place in the meeting of friends.

“For a few days,” said Welitz, “I should be glad to leave this place; and I think I cannot be gone too soon. I could go to the summer hunting lodge, where I was count Bruhl’s companion; for all here is but misery and distraction to me.”

“Agreed. I will make every necessary arrangement for your departure early in the morning: I will accompany you part of the way thither, that I may tell you of my singular adventures after you saved my life, and the circumstances which gave rise to the supposition I was no more,” said the young count; and embracing Welitz with the tenderness of a brother, he left him to return to the dancers.

CHAPTER V.  
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Despair! thy soul is dark as night,
And well thy *smile* each bud can blight
That decks the tree of life ;
Yet is thy bosom's blasting reign,
The soul-benumbing, sleepy pain,
Far better than the burning strife
Of half-expiring hope—the hate
Of life which swells the heart,
When dark remorse and blackening fate,
From a bright cloud of pleasure start,
Doubting to stay, or to depart.

HENRY STEBBING.

THE young count Bruhl had fully considered Welitz's severe disappointment; he had felt the pangs of parted love, and knew to what an extent of misery they led *him*; it was therefore with feelings of sympathy he seated himself beside him in the sledge which was to convey them to Wolki. Both were for some time silent; for the calm despair of Welitz awed his

companion into a sentiment of sorrow, which it was not easy to overcome: there was a gloom, of a nature not to be described, on his brow, and a certain lowering expression in his countenance, which struck Ferdinand with an indefinable feeling he could not explain.

“ You have promised me your history, count,” said Welitz, after they had been some miles on their journey; “ perhaps it will not now be disagreeable to you to relate it—for I do feel some considerable interest in your adventures, and shall be glad if you will relate them to me.”

“ To that,” said Ferdinand, “ I can have no objection; and as we have just refreshed ourselves, I am all the better prepared for the detail, though it is but short, and will not take me long to tell it.

“ My father, you know, sent me to my second cousin's for a short time, under the impression travelling would cure me of a very dangerous complaint I had that time upon me: it was a kind of low-spirited and hypochondriacal disease, which reduced

me, by constant anxiety, to a mere skeleton. The physicians gave it in, as their opinions, I must amuse my mind by travelling, and change of scene, as the only remedy against premature death.

“Howitzer, my cousin, lived at Oranien, in Norway; he was a good-hearted, good-natured man, and so amused me by his conversation, that I felt my low spirits vanish away each day I was under his roof: we shot—we walked—we rode, and constantly employed ourselves in some pursuits which amused our minds, and invigorated our bodies. Howitzer, whom you know, had a sister who lived with him, who looked to his domestic affairs, but always had a singular antipathy to me: it was her conduct indeed which often made me think of leaving his residence, and talk of returning to Russia. I found too that the exercise I took was getting too laborious for me; and she was constantly hinting to me, when her brother was out of the way—‘You will find St. Petersburg much more adapted to you

now, than the cold, bleak winds of Norway.' She would then add—' Why do you take so much exercise? Howitzer takes you journeys too long:' and once she plainly told me, ' she expected some friends, and the apartments I occupied would be wanted.' I intended to leave them in a few days, and should have done so, had not the following incident occurred:—Howitzer, who found the bottle had charms, one day, after drinking a great deal, in which I bore him company, asked me to go with him to see a nest, built by a curious bird, on a tree about a mile from the house. ' Nothing loth,' I went, and observing it was at no great distance from the earth, I proposed to mount the tree, that I might survey the nest at my pleasure. Howitzer, whose head was not perhaps quite clear, assured me there was no danger, though the branch on which the nest was, was directly over a small canal. I accordingly climbed up the trunk of the tree, and had nearly reached the end of the branch where the nest was, when it

suddenly gave way, and precipitated me into the water below. I was a tolerable swimmer, and after the first dive was over, I made for shore, where Howitzer was endeavouring to assist me; but being no amphibious creature, he could not live anywhere but on *terra firma*; therefore he had not risked his own life by throwing himself into the canal to save me.

“ I caught a violent cold, which confined me to my room some weeks; and Howitzer and myself mutually agreed it would be best not to let my father know any thing of my accident, but write to him, and say I was amending as usual.

“ One day Onillia, Howitzer’s sister, came to my bedside, and finding I was much better, she said—‘ When do you intend to return to St. Petersburg?’

‘ When I find *you* are *not* tired of me,’ I replied.

‘ Pray answer me correctly; I have particular reasons for asking.’

‘ Very soon—in a week.’

‘ Which way do you go?’

‘ By Darien, and St. Hildebrand.’

‘ Oh, well, well!’ she interrupted, ‘ that is all sufficient;’ and she rose up to give me some medicine, changing the conversation (which I thought was of no moment) immediately.

“ I was soon well enough to ramble about as usual; and as Oranien is within a few furlongs of the sea, I not unfrequently amused myself by wandering on the shore, watching the vessels which passed, and sometimes paddling a small boat for my own diversion.

“ One evening it promised to be hazy, and irregular showers of sleety rain combined to heighten the obscurity of a clouded sky. I was in my little boat, some distance from land: in spite of my repeated efforts to reach the shore, I found myself bewildered by the darkness, and dazzled by the sparkling of the distant waves, when their tops broke into a wreath of foam. The sea ran high, and I began to anticipate a watery grave; for I had no longer any command or power over my

little canoe, but was at the mercy of a tempestuous ocean, and the ruthless rage of beating billows. In vain were cries for help—no one was near to render assistance, and my tongue was parched with an indescribable dread of inevitable destruction. I thought I could descry ships at a distance, and shouted loudly, that they might render me help—endeavouring at the same time to turn my little canoe towards them; but it was vain my struggling, and I have reason to think, had I been able to obtain my wishes, I should have been dashed to pieces, as the huge masses I imagined were ships, were neither more nor less than the points and trunks of large rocks, growing in the water!

“The wind blew with terrific violence, and I felt every moment might be my last; for I naturally dreaded my canoe might be upset. My hands too, from the intense cold, were become numb and useless, and I dragged with difficulty my oars into the canoe, and began to revive them by clapping them violently together. Whilst I

was engaged in this operation, like a small star just rising in the heavens, I saw a light at an immense distance ; it appeared at first no larger than the point of a needle, or pin, but as my boat floated along, it seemed larger and larger, and, by its remaining fixed, I guessed it was the solitary beacon of some lighthouse, and I was glad my canoe drifted in that direction. The rapidity with which the current of the waves drove me along, soon brought me near enough to distinguish it was a lantern, in all probability suspended for the leading mark of some fishermen who were at sea. Amid the intense gloom, and the roaring of the water, I thought I could distinguish voices on the shore : I called for help—‘ Lost ! lost ! ’ I cried, as I saw myself dashing away from the light, and bearing onwards to the dangerous rocks of Jet Neuf. My oars were washed away, and I every moment grew more desperate for life, which it seemed impossible to preserve—and more anxious for safety when none appeared to be in view. All at once

I heard a plunge in the ocean, and a GAL-LANT BEING, at the peril of his own life, said, in English (a language I did not understand), something indicative of his horror at my fate. The darkness did not permit me to recognise his face, or even to permit me to know whether he was an enemy or a friend; but suddenly seizing me, he dragged me over into the water, and swam with me to the sands, where there were several Norwegian peasants awaiting his arrival: at perceiving us they set up a shout of joy; and I may now ask, if my deliverer did not feel at that moment a sensation, of which no pen can speak, and no tongue can tell?"

Welitz for a moment suffered the gloom to pass away from his face, and turned away from the joyous, happy, expressive countenance of the young count, as if unable to endure his glance.—“Before you continue your history,” said Welitz, “you know the being who saved you is here before you: there are few men, whatever their crimes, who cannot sometimes feel;

but an act of generosity cannot wipe away *crime*! An act of generosity is only a tribute of vanity man pays to gain the homage of the world. I saved you—but why? It was not that I pitied your fate—it was because no one else durst venture—but shuddered at the danger, as hazarding their lives. Mine was of no importance to me; and many times since I have regretted I preserved an existence so darkened by error and crime, only to perhaps endure more exquisite miseries.”

As Welitz spoke, the young count could not help observing his face assume the same sullen fixture of despair it had from the first of their journey; yet it did not seem his mind was depressed to apathy or indifference; he seemed brooding on the past, and ruminating on a cheerless future.

The young count at length pursued his narrative as follows, having first entreated Welitz to accept from him a valuable ring, in testimony of his having rendered him a service he could never forget. It.

was with much persuasion Welitz consented so to do; and after that preliminary, Ferdinand continued thus:—"After you had disappeared, and my recovery was deemed sufficient for me to return to Oranien, I hired a sledge to convey me there, determined to trust no more to the waves of a treacherous sea. I reached it at sunset the following day; and Howltzer, who began to think I was lost, testified, at my return home, the most lively sensations of joy. Onillia, I thought, seemed less pleased with me for again intruding on her hospitality, and occupying the rooms she intended for *her* friends; and I perceived, from the manners of the brother and sister to each other, a warfare of some nature existed between them. Onillia rarely spoke to him; and Howltzer, who rallied her with great good humour, endeavoured to make it appear that her taciturnity was occasioned by the death of a green parrot, of which she was remarkably fond. Onillia was so angry,

she could scarcely command herself sufficiently to be civil; but, a little restrained by my presence, she only answered his remarks by frowns and sour looks.

‘It strikes me,’ said I one day to him, ‘that my presence is very disagreeable to your sister; for I perceive she does not scruple to tell me, in plain terms, she wants my absence. Give my love to her, and tell her to make herself happy, for I leave you for a certainty in a week, and have this day been employed in writing letters to my father and friends at St. Petersburg, to give them the information.’

‘You will not surely be so ridiculous as to regard Onillia,’ said my cousin: ‘she is very much enraged to think I will not consent to her marriage with the fop Frityla; but as my father left her property to my care, and enjoined me, on his death-bed, to prevent her forming an imprudent match, I cannot in conscience allow her to unite herself to a man who does not possess a single requisite to make her happy. It is this that makes her so spiteful against

all my friends, and you in particular; but we must look over her sauciness, and make ourselves as comfortable as we can.'

"I could not forbear laughing, though to Onillia it was no laughing matter; and telling Howitzer I found myself recovered, and that I had very, VERY dear friends in St. Petersburg, whom I wished to see, he did not much persuade me to stay, as I confessed myself weary of Norway, and yearned for my own native shore.

'There's joy for you,' said Howitzer to Onillia, when we were dining together; 'your torment, Ferdinand, leaves us in a week, and swears he will never return.'

"Onillia raised her eyes with an expression I shall never forget, and fixed them on Howitzer with a fixed and contemptuous glance.

'Onillia,' said I, 'at least I charge you to behave well to me this last week, that, when you come to St. Petersburg, I may pay you in the same way. I shall then,

I hope, introduce you to my wife, Catherina Dolgorucki.'

'Ah, she is very handsome,' said Howitzer.—'Shew Onillia her portrait, Ferdinand;' and taking the miniature from my hand, he pressed the spring, and presented Catherina's image to his sister's view.

"Onillia looked at it a moment, and then directed her eyes to a different object, without uttering a syllable.

'See,' said Howitzer, 'she is envious.'

'ENVIOUS!' she replied scornfully—
'*God forbid!*'

"When I parted from Howitzer, I felt as if I was leaving a brother behind me; but I was somewhat reassured and delighted by hearing Onillia and himself intended to pass the ensuing winter in St. Petersburg, as they meant to dispose of their Norwegian estate, and quit that kingdom entirely. Onillia was in a small vestibule, as I was leaving the house; and though her manners to me had been evidently disagreeable and repulsive, I could

not forget she had, in many instances, proved a kind and attentive nurse. I went up to her; on which I thought she changed colour, and the tears seemed ready to flow.

‘I am going,’ I said—‘farewell!’

‘Your route lies through Darien and St. Hildebrand,’ she replied, without apparently noticing my words.

‘Yes.’

‘That is a dangerous forest to the left of St. Hildebrand;’ and then checking herself, she added—‘but you and your servant are well armed—I saw your pistols lying on the table—so you won’t fear.’

‘Fear! oh no.’ And embracing her, I took my leave.

“My guide, my servant, and myself, in a small cart, drawn by a pair of good horses, set off from Howitzer’s mansion, who, in the warmth and generosity of his heart, could not refrain from accompanying us some part of the way, till I insisted on his return, lest he might be involved

in the darkness of night: with mutual promises of affection, we parted; and I watched him till a sudden turn in the mountain hid him from my view. I thought nothing of the forest of St. Hildebrand, till my guide, with something of dread in his tone, said, in the Danish tongue, directing my eyes to a huge and darkening mass of pines and firs—‘Yonder is St. Hildebrand; a man was murdered there a month since.’

“ I inquired the circumstances; and with the avidity of a vulgar mind, which delights in the marvellous and dreadful, he related to me the whole affair. There is something which, even in the relation of a murder, harrows the mind with inconceivable dread—(Welitz shuddered as if convulsively)—there is something which the bare idea of it alone, of having heard man has wronged man of his life, chills one with horror, and chains our faculties to a feeling, for which the enormity of the crime can only account.”

Welitz seized the count by the arm,

and then as suddenly relinquished his grasp, as if recollecting himself; and the count went on, though the agitation testified by his companion caused him also to start.

“ If you ever went into a thick forest, after the relation of a horrid and barbarous murder, you may perhaps be able to conjecture what my feelings were; my guide not overstocked with courage, my servant the same, and my own mind impressed with gloomy images of blood and horror. A curving rugged road led us to the entrance of the forest, which was for the most part composed of pines, firs, and brushwood, thickly interwoven together, and forming, over the path through which we bent our way, a bower which, to other eyes than mine, might have been beautiful and picturesque. I endeavoured, in as calm and indifferent a voice as I could, to inquire whether my companions had their arms in readiness, in case of a surprise. The guide vehemently asserted, his were ‘ in perfect readiness;’ and my

servant, in a timid voice, said 'his were also prepared.'

'I dreamt such a singular dream,' said he to the guide, 'last night, that I verily believe we shall meet with some mischance in this wood.'

'A witch take your dreams!' said the guide, looking around—'why don't you put on your horses faster? we don't want to be all night in this place; and twilight is gone by.—By St. Henry,' added he, 'if there is not the very place where Cronsant was murdered, who I have just told you of.'

"I lifted up my eyes, to see this place to which the guide directed my man's attention; it was more gloomy than any other part of the forest we had yet seen; and by the spot was a cavity which led some way into a fissure of earth; it was then darkened by twilight's dim mistiness, and I saw my servant endeavouring to drive quickly past it, saying at the same time to the guide, 'I wish you had

not told me that horrid tale, for it makes a man shiver to think of it.'

"I found darkness began to overspread us, and expressed my apprehensions we might miss our way; but my guide silenced these doubts, by saying he knew the road blindfold.—'And for that,' said he to my man, 'I will tell you a story. One night——' he stopped, hesitated, and looked back.

'Do you see any thing?' said I, not a little alarmed.

'Ay, do you see any thing?' exclaimed my servant at the same moment.

'No—nothing, only a wild cat. I hate wild cats—they are no good tokens,' replied he. 'I remember once——Hist! there she is again.'

'I wish you would not talk,' exclaimed I, for my nervous irritation of feeling began to be beyond endurance.—'And you, Joseph, attend to your horses; drive fast, for I care not how soon we are out of this forest.'

‘Nor I,’ said my servant, lashing the horses—‘Oh, that I were but in my dear St. Petersburg, with my——’

‘Hold your tongue,’ said I furiously, for I thought I saw two figures standing half concealed by the gloom and foliage of the trees, ‘and drive on : are your pistols ready?’

“We went like the wind; and the panting of our horses, and their outstretched nostrils, gave sufficient evidence of our terror, if terror it might be termed. But I assure you it is an awkward feeling, when you find yourself in a dangerous place, with gloomy visions in our mind, and dismal objects around you.”

“I know what it is to travel thus—nay, worse,” advanced Welitz hoarsely—“I have journeyed with remorse, despair, and an evil conscience, for my companions.”

The young count looked at him, and for a moment seemed surprised and astonished; but, at Welitz’s earnest request, he went on.

“A discharge of firearms acted on our

frames like an electric shock. I seized my pistols, and at that same instant pulled the trigger of one of them, directing it to the man from whom I received the attack ; it went off, but without report or effect, being previously unloaded. My servant's were the same ; and, without weapons, we were to defend ourselves against the skill and power of two wretches who, I make no doubt, had concerted to murder us. None are so desperate as those who see no hope ; it was under the impulse of this feeling, I grappled with with one of the wretches, who had fastened himself (like a tiger on his prey) on me. At last, the guide being levelled to the earth, and my servant wounded so desperately as to render him of no service, both ruffians fell upon me, succeeded in overpowering even my desperate strength, and, binding me hand and foot, put me on a horse, protesting, if I made the least noise, they would put me to death. This was my adventure in the forest of St. Hildebrand."

“ But they did not MURDER you?”
said Welitz.

“ No; they *were* kind enough to spare my life, or I should not have been here,”
said the young count laughing; “ but as I am somewhat weary, we will take some refreshment at this elegant inn, hotel, or what you please to term it; and then I will continue my adventure, which more resembles one we read of in novels, than what we find in real life.”

Welitz assented; and alighting, they went into a small kind of cottage, where they regaled themselves after the manner of the country.

CHAPTER VI.
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Go list the wretch's tale, go hear him tell  
The woes that led from virtue ere he fell;  
Then when thy soul his sighs of sorrow cloy,  
Then ask thy heart if man be born for joy.

HENRY STEBBING.

“ I PERCEIVED,” continued the count, after they were once more in the sledge, “ that the villains pushed on their horses at a great and swift pace. I demanded where I was going, and by whose commands they made me a prisoner, and whether they did not intend to murder me? I received no answer to these interrogations; and when day began to break, I discovered the persons of my companions; they were hardened, fierce, and lowering-looking men, and I perceived were determined to treat my requests with an obstinate silence. They were habited in the Norwegian peasants' dresses, with the ex-

ception of a small cloak, instead of which they had on their shoulders thick coverings of hair. This rendered them doubly terrific in their appearance; but my own reflections made me more wretched than it is in my power to describe. The anxiety of my father, of Catherina—the agony of Howitzer, and the joy of Onillia, to think her scheme flourished (for I had no doubt but that *she* had unloaded my pistols, and those of my servant and the guide, who I began to feel suspicious was in league with her, and had purposely delayed us at Averige, that we might be in the forest of St. Hildebrand at an hour convenient for his purpose)—all flashed across my mind. I had some valuable rings in my luggage, which I guessed the ruffians had left behind them; but, to my surprise, I perceived the elder man of the two had one of my largest trunks on before him. I attempted to bribe them to let me go free, by every means in my possession; my watch, set in diamonds—my money—by large promises of more emo-

lument; but they were deaf to my entreaties, and bade me be pacified and happy, for I should take no harm. To be brief, they conveyed me to a small hut, where a female appeared, who seemed to be in expectation of us. She had an agreeable cast of feature, and I perceived made every preparation for my comfort. I say mine, because she had set me a table apart from the one in readiness for the two Danes, purposely for me, and by several little acts of kindness testified that she was not my enemy. I could, however, eat little or nothing, for my mind and heart were alike distracted by thoughts on the future and the past. I represented to myself the agony of my father (a man unaccustomed to subdue any passions), the regret and misery of Catharina, and the horrid uncertainty of my own fate. From the woman I, however, learned that I was in no fear of my life; but when I perceived the heavy bars of iron on the windows of the cottage, the close attendance of the two men, I despaired of ever escaping; no hope existed

to raise my soul to energy, or stimulate me to the means of relief; and the very complaint which my father had fondly flattered himself was entirely eradicated, returned with double vigour. I became oppressed with a heavy melancholy; and at last an insanity, to which the Bruhl family is subject, came upon me. I am now aware it must have been upon me for some months, during which the woman attended me with the greatest care; but one man never left me, except once. Finding myself alone, I ventured to endeavour to open the door, and walk; for I was too weak to think of making my escape—I did so. Mallis (the woman) was in the garden, sweeping a path through the snow; she let me pass her, and even reach the gate; I looked back at her, as much as to say, ‘Oh, had I my strength, I would never return!’

‘*Not yet,*’ said she to me, in the Danish tongue; ‘*you are not able.*’

‘*When I am,*’ I advanced in a low voice, ‘*you will be my friend?*’

‘ I will—don’t talk to me—Smoliff will be suspicious.’

“ He at that moment appeared, and chided Mallis for permitting me so much liberty, threatening her with hard usage if she ever was guilty of the like again.

‘ The man is mad,’ I heard her say angrily ; ‘ and if he were not, he’s too weak to think of running away—so make yourself easy.’

“ That night she twice attempted to speak to me, but was prevented by the presence of Smoliff. In the morning she found means to say—‘ Go into the garden—look to the left, in the snow.’

“ I went; on it was written—‘ *Feign yourself mad again, and ill too ; Smoliff is ill, and his brother wants to go a journey.*’

“ I directly saw through the whole scheme, and with avidity entered into it. To further my designs, I began to run about the garden, as if in a fresh delirium, talking incoherently, and answering every question put to me with wildness and

nonsense. From this I thought proper to relapse into low spirits, and apparently to be so indisposed as not to quit my bed. Smoliff was deceived by this; and his brother, who really was ill, made no scruple of leaving me hours together, to repose himself on his mattress, though Smoliff's last words had been—'Look well to your prisoner;' but he left me entirely to Mallis. I was so strong that I assured Mallis I could, without difficulty, walk several miles without fatigue. I lingered impatiently for the time when I should be at LIBERTY!—when I should return to my father and my Catherina; and let those who, for months and years, have been denied the blessing of seeing their friends and native land, imagine my transport when Mallis told me in twenty-four hours I should be set free. A violent burst of tears was my only reply, for nature could no longer resist.

'Mallis,' I said, when I could speak, 'how shall I ever repay you?—what shall



I give you for this token of regard to me?’

‘You must give me your prayers,’ she said, ‘and your promises of eternal secrecy as to your confinement, or rather to the wo——I mean the person who confined you here.’

‘I know who it is,’ I replied; ‘and *you* know Onillia Bruhl is the being; but if it involves you in trouble, or danger, nothing shall ever be discovered; and I will endeavour to account for my absence by some tale, which my father, in his joy at seeing me again, will readily believe.’

‘That,’ she answered, ‘cannot be; all I know, I gleaned one night from Smoliff, who was talking to his brother. They said, if ever you got free, or were discovered, a pretty commotion it would cause; madam—madam O—— would inherit something when you died, which her brother could not prevent her of; that he did not choose her to throw herself away on count F——.’

“I perfectly remembered that my mo-

ther, when dying, signed a deed, empowering me to inherit an estate, which, by right of birth, in case of my death, Onillia would possess; in case *she* died, her brother; and I chilled to think love should urge her to commit a deed at which her soul might tremble hereafter.

‘ And where is Onillia now ? ’ I asked.

“ Mallis did not know; but she knew the brother of Smoliff was gone into Russia—that Smoliff was too ill to pursue me, even if he found out the route I might take—and that if I promised her I never, on any emergency, would reveal her interference as being productive of my freedom, she would make it appear that I had destroyed myself; and, for the furtherance of that scheme, would deposit some of my clothes by the side of a deep chasm, in which it should seem I had plunged myself in the agony of madness; and though it must eventually prove itself false, yet it would prevent pursuit.

“ Smoliff’s brother set off on his journey a week before *I* thought of going

mine. Smoliff himself was very ill, and tormented with a guilty conscience—the worst of all human evils—(Welitz looked on the count with a lowering eye)—and did little else but drink brandy and sing. The night of my intended departure, he sat below, opposite to me. I feigned being very ill, and, closing my eyes, leaned on my chair, as if wishing to sleep.

‘The Russian looks thin,’ said Smoliff, quaffing some more brandy; ‘come, Mallis, stir about, and get me some supper, for one can do nothing till one has eaten something; and he may try a bit if he can.’

‘*He* try a bit!’ said Mallis scornfully—‘you know better than that; I never saw him worse than he was to-day; come, get your supper, and go to bed.’

‘Go to bed! not I; besides I have not sung a song.’

‘I wish you would not sing,’ she replied, ‘for my head aches, and you have such a horrid voice.’

‘ Sister, sister,’ said Smoliff, ‘ my voice never was so good as poor Helo’s ; nevertheless, I can sing a song yet.’

“ And whilst Mallis was getting the dried fish and bread, he sung the following air, which, thanks to my memory, I have not forgotten.

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**BALLAD.**

“ Go saddle me my Danish steed, which in my stable stands,  
Go get me then my bonny sword, obey my just commands;  
For I have heard the Water King hath stole my love so  
bright,

And I will claim my Effa dear, though now ’tis dead mid-  
night.

“ \* The moonlight gleamed upon the hill, and bright was  
many a star,

And gallant Archibald the Great, he rode both wide and  
far;

Yet saw he not the Water King, nor yet his Effa dear,  
But on the lily stood the dew, and on the rose a tear!

“ We said the moon ray on the hill at distance sweet was  
shining,

We say the flag upon the tower around the pole was twin-  
ing ;

\* This is in the metre usual in Norway, which reminds  
us strongly of—“ Oh, Miss Baillie—unfortunate Miss  
Baillié !”

And gentle Effa sleeping lay all beauteous on her pillow,  
As sunbeams lay their golden beams at rest upon the billow."

'I wish,' said Mallis, angrily, 'you would eat your fish and go to bed. What with you and this Russian, I am almost wearied out of my life: and singing!—such singing as yours is worse than a shipwrecked seaman's cry.'

'I never heard a cry but once that touched me,' said Smoliff; 'but, however, I hate to think of that; so I will even finish my song. Let me see—"at rest upon the billow."

'At rest upon the billow!' said Mallis, 'see that *you* find rest upon the earth.'

'WOMAN!' said Smoliff, in a voice which made me start, as well as Mallis, 'beware—beware how you provoke me; let me finish my song in peace, I say.'

"The Water King, like any knight, his steed all hous'd with gold,

Rung at the gate—his charger then pawed long, and fierce, and bold.

'I come to ask for Effa dear,' the Water King he said,

'A warrior I, of martial fame, I ask the maid to wed;

For I have castles, gold, and lands, and valiant deeds beside,

All these I lay at Effa's feet, if she will be my bride.'

‘ Oh, wake, my lovely Effa, wake !’ the father gently said,  
‘ A wealthy knight is come, to ask thy gentle hand to wed :  
Forget thy old love Archibald, for he has got no land,  
Awake, awake, and give to *this* new love thy lily hand.’

“ Then Effa spake—and beautiful her voice came from the  
bed—

‘ Dear Archibald I love, none other will I wed ;  
Strive not to break my stern resolves, for these resolves are  
true,  
Two beings only can I love—my Archibald and you.”

‘ The fish is ready,’ interposed Mallis  
again.

“ Smoliff made no reply, but by continuing his song in a voice somewhat obstinately louder than common.

“ Up then spake the Water King—‘ Oh, maiden, go with me,  
For Archibald is far away, upon the briny sea.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ I have every reason to suppose,” said the count, laughing, “ that Effa consented to go with the Water King ; but Smoliff, whose recollection was a little dimmed by the brandy, took up the ballad at these words:—

‘ Oh, gently, gently push your steed, for even now I see,  
The water is flowing, love, far, far beyond my knee.

Oh, Christ me save ! Oh, Father, some help to me oh bring !  
For I have got a lover false—the cruel Water King.”

‘ The fish is ready,’ said Mallis again, with more than a woman’s temerity ; ‘ and I can tell you I am tired of watching here, night after night, by this mad Russian, who, some day or other, may take it in his head to murder me.—Come,’ said she to me, in a harsh accent, ‘ come and get *your* supper.’

“ I had been previously instructed to refuse, and consequently did so.

‘ Go to bed,’ exclaimed Mallis, in the same tone, ‘ and that quickly.’

‘ Bed is the safest place for *him*,’ added Smoliff.

‘ And for you also,’ she said, with some harshness ; and, taking up a lamp, I followed her to the door of my room. Having entered it, I turned to my conductress, who, with the lamp in her hand, stood powerless and motionless as a statue.—‘ Mallis,’ I said, in a low voice, ‘ do you repent—do you repent your kindness, and flinch now the hour of escape is come ?’

‘ No,’ she answered, contemplating me with a sort of agitated dread ; ‘ but these men, though bad, wicked, and wretched, once knew better days—they are my BROTHERS—and, in letting you go free, perhaps I am the instrument of crushing them ; for *my* sake, then——’

‘ I understand you,’ I replied ; ‘ and if you believe there is any faith in man, or that a prisoner can love, and hold an honourable feeling towards a woman who gives him liberty, think of me : I will not swear, for oaths in this case could not bind—Mallis, I promise you they need fear nothing from me.’

“ How beautiful did this woman appear to me, as with the slanting rays of a flickering lamp, I saw her eyes fixed on mine, as much as to say, ‘ I believe you !’ She was full thirty-five—short—yet had an indescribable cast in her countenance, which I had always respected, but now adored. Had she been a few years younger, I might have loved her with a different sentiment ; but, happily, this was not the case.



“ Smoliff was soon in a sound sleep, as his breathing testified; and Mallis, with courageous looks, and a beckoning hand, invited me through the room where he was at rest. I shall never forget what I felt when I passed him; with what light steps I followed Mallis to the door which opened into the garden; and after I was there, when I was waiting her reappearance at the window to throw me out such packages as were indispensable to take with me—no one can judge what my sensations were.

“ She told me to bear away to the right—to keep in the beaten road—to converse but little, and to purchase a change of dress the first opportunity: this I had determined to do; and after an adieu, which I thought would be eternal, I took my leave; and so did this woman’s kindness hang upon me, that I regained my freedom with a sigh, to think I should never more behold her.

“ I will not tire you by a repetition of my adventures on *my* way to St. Peters-

burg. I was not pursued; and on the evening of my father's ball I reached home. With what anxiety did I gain the well-known house, and await the answer of the servants to my ringing at the door! The windows were all illuminated, and the hall splendidly decorated with flowers and variegated lamps. I forgot I was considered as no longer to be in existence; that another (*you* Welitz) was my father's chosen heir; and, with dismay, I heard Catherina was to be your bride. The domestic who told me this, said, it would shortly take place, and *he was glad of it.*

“ I left some casual message, saying I would call again; and by the assistance of a young friend, who was in my secret, procured a black habit and mask, in which I was ushered into the room where my FATHER was. My feelings almost overpowered me at the moment I first saw him; he was much thinner and paler; his hair seemed bleached whiter also than it had been when we parted. I stood before him motionless and still, until a sudden

rush of company parted us, and brought me to Catherina."

"Pass over *that*, for my sake," interrupted Welitz, with an air of morose melancholy.

"I will; but here let me, with heartfelt gratitude, with a sentiment time nor absence can ever wear out, tell you, your resignation of Catherina makes me hold a friendship for you, which nothing can ever weaken."

"Those are bold words," exclaimed Welitz, his countenance lighting up with a peculiar smile.

"But true ones," said the young count.

"Let my crimes and my misfortunes prove them," added Welitz again.

"Be what you may," said the young count, smiling, "you have my everlasting gratitude."

"*Everlasting gratitude!*" added Welitz, with quickness and irritation—"the plant is rare, still I do not deny its growth. You, count, shall know the extent of my friendship for you."

The count did not raise his eyes to behold the countenance of Welitz as he spoke these words; but, as his generous heart dictated, he was summing up in his own mind how to render Welitz happier and more comfortable. All but Catherina would have been his, had he desired to command it; but Welitz was then in a state of mind which demanded repose, and the young count felt it an alloy to his bliss, to think he had, unintentionally, been the cause of disquiet to another; and if this is not a proof of a good and feeling heart, we know not what is.

CHAPTER VII.  
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—Here let me range, and think, ay think
Till my heart bleeds——

Ha ! will I not stop this bleeding ?
Are all the ways, the means, the hopes of life
Closed on a luckless wretch like me ?

Manuscript Old Play.

IN retirement, if a man is virtuous, he naturally falls into plans for the furtherance of good. In retirement, if a man is evil and corrupt, he is but too apt to fall into plans of wickedness.

Welitz, once stationed at Wolki, did not give himself up to the life of a despairing lover ; he took continual and even laborious exercise, to change the disquietude of his mind into a less painful train of feeling ; he read and wrote with even more than common attention, and sought, apparently, to kill the pangs of chagrin by constant employment.

Within a league of Wolki were a few families, whose fortunes did not permit them to visit St. Petersburg during the winter; with these Welitz visited, and occasionally they called on him at the Lodge. His foreign accent, and peculiarity of manner, was by no means displeasing to the young ladies, who sought, by all their little coquetries, to induce him to reveal the cause, why he was so very melancholy? and why he left St. Petersburg, when every one else was dying to be there?

He was one evening at Velina, apparently gay, and almost happy, when the subject was started; the bare mention of it changed his cheek to a pale and ghastly hue; and Alfa, a young lady who was present, observing the marked alteration in his features, exclaimed—"Come let us have some music, if our guest has no objection, and I will choose a song. What think you of this—' Merrily rings the camel's bell."

" Or this—' *Love and blood*," advanced her sister.

" Ah, the air is sweet; and, if you will

sing it, I will play the accompaniment," said Alfa.—"Are you fond of solemn things?" she continued, turning to the young Englishman; but he was then at some paces distant from them, looking intently through the window.—"Count Welitz," said Alfa, getting up, "shall we sing 'Love and blood?'"

"Oh! don't ask him," exclaimed her sister, in a whisper, "only look at his countenance!"

Alfa looked, and saw it was torn by different emotions; the pale flash of crimson which had illuminated his countenance, when they had sportively asked him why he was absent from St. Petersburg, was gone, and a gloom indescribable and sad seemed to have taken its place; and the sisters equally feared to disturb the reverie into which he was plunged, as to return to their seats without endeavouring to dispel the cloud they had unintentionally raised.

Suddenly starting round, he caught them each by their hands—"Happy, happy

creatures!—innocent, and lovely—may *you* ever continue so! The innocent may always be blessed.”

Alfa laughed at what she termed his romance; but on her sister it seemed to make a forcible impression. The strong expression on his face, and the more than powerful inference of his words, caused her to look on him with an expression of dread.—“Oh, you terrify me!” said Angelica, wresting her hand from his.

“Ah—no wonder!” he replied, releasing her—“*no wonder!*”

Angelica saw the eyes, which at that moment could not encounter hers, drop from her astonished gaze: she read guilt in them, and with quick steps hastened to the furthest end of the room.—“I would not trust that man,” she said, when she was alone with her sister; “for there are lines in his countenance which make me shudder. How he looked, when he said—‘No wonder!’—I could almost fancy he has shed human blood.”

“Ah, this is fancy!” said Alfa, with a

short, quick sigh. "I see no lines which make *me* shudder: we do not know his history, and we will not, because his fate is involved in mystery, condemn him till we are convinced he is not what he seems."

"It is not fancy," said Angelica: "why do I shudder when I look upon him?"

"Why do *I* not shudder also?" asked Alfa.

"Why," pursued Angelica, "do I dread his touch, and almost fancy when I see his hand, there is blood on it? this cannot be mere nervous affection, or ideal fancy; it is presentiment of truth."

"Go," said Alfa, a moment after—"you talk childishly. Great misfortunes have driven this young Englishman from his native land, and shall we brand him with the odium of a foul crime, because we are ignorant of his real frailties? Rather let us endeavour to think it less than it is."

"I am no philosopher," said Angelica; "hereafter you will see who is right; but I confess, such is the horror I have conceived of Welitz, that I never wish to see

him at Velina again. Look at the paleness on his brow—the trembling of his nerves—the caution of his expressions!—do not these argue all is not right within? and I say again, never more do I wish to behold him.”

Alfa was far from coinciding with Angelica's remark, and shading her eyes for a moment, she said—“Till something palpable and clear convinces me of Welitz's guilt, I must remain a sceptic.”

At Velina, Welitz found himself a welcome guest. The gentle Alfa, with less and less reserve, heard his strong expressions of pleasure, when *she* extended her hand; but Angelica still withheld hers: a more than ordinary pride made her treat him with chilling coldness, which he was far too penetrating not to perceive. Even Alfa's father chided her for a mode of conduct which was at once displeasing to his sense of hospitality, as to his guest's delicacy; but no reproof could win Angelica to alter her manners to one at whom her nature revolted.—“This is impulse—

strong, potent, powerful presentiment," she said, "and nothing can convince me of Welitz's principle or innocence!"

Alfa, on the other hand, to hide the increasing contempt her sister evinced, treated Welitz with all that gentle mildness which a man knows so well how to appreciate; and Welitz soon shewed how sensibly he was touched by her manners. The idea of possessing Catherina had been abandoned; he seemed only to be calm and happy when he was at Velina; and Angelica, with increasing dismay, saw how much Alfa was attaching herself to a being whom she could scarcely believe was worthy the name of man.—"Spare yourself future misery," she said one day to her sister: "you love Welitz; vain are your endeavours to hide it—vainly do you try to deceive me. Oh, my sister, guard yourself against the stings of a miserable and unhappy passion, and take warning ere it is too late!"

Alfa, with a crimsoned cheek and downcast eye, attempted no excuse; and Ange-

lica, urged by the tenderest feelings for her welfare, could only add—" You must see Welitz no more: this is the sacrifice demanded at your hands; for your virtue, your family, your honour, I entreat you to avoid his presence! Our fortunes are small—our income confined; but, oh! let me not add, my sister is degraded!"

Alfa leaned against a tree for support—" Judge not harshly," she said, faintly; " I love; but I know not I am beloved again. Let his guilt be but proved, and I shall be free; but sure Welitz cannot be criminal."

" Yes," said the being of whom they spoke, suddenly darting through the brushwood, " I am unworthy *you*. Why do you respect a wretch covered with shame and crime? Your scorn—your contempt, I could have borne—but your generosity kills me! I will not offer you a heart, which is not by its owner deemed worthy of you; but will fly from the presence of a woman, who blesses me by her love. Once I could have sought with honour

your hand; but NOW we must part. If in your prayers you deign to think of me—if you will sometimes deign to remember me, remember me only as a man whose guilt must be his ruin: yes, I *am* guilty—I *am* an outcast; but a woman, and one who loves me, I will not injure.—Farewell!”

“Yet, stay,” said Alfa, in faltering accents, extending her hand, “but a single moment. What is this crime—what this guilt, of which you speak?”

“If I told you,” replied Welitz, quickly, “you would shiver with abhorrence—you would turn from me with horror—and your only feeling towards me would be disgust. Your sister has awakened me from a dream of ideal bliss—I thank her for having saved me.”

“Tell us your crime,” said Angelica; “for it cannot well be a worse one than that which our imaginations have formed.”

“Ah, tell us,” exclaimed Alfa, bending herself towards him with merciful digni-

ty, "that our suspense may end for ever here."

"Farewell!" said Welitz; "it is better for you to imagine me worse than I am. Forget me, dearest Alfa.—And you, Angelica, forget me also: I own my unworthiness to be remembered, so farewell!" He darted from the spot, and in his eagerness to fly the presence of one whom he loved with tenderness and affection, a letter fell from his pocket, which Angelica picked up, calling to him to stay; but his great haste had led him so far distant from them, that he disappeared out of sight before she had power to utter a syllable.

Neither attempted to look into it, though it was unsealed, and thereby gave them an opportunity of so doing; and strongly as curiosity and other motives impelled Angelica to wish it, her honour was too great to permit her even to harbour such an idea for a moment. Before they reached home, Welitz overtook them on horseback; and in an eager tone he

inquired whether they had seen a letter which he had lost?

Angelica produced it.—“ We have not, of course,” she said, “ looked into it.”

“ I never for a moment suspected you would,” he replied : “ had you, you might have discovered who I am, and for what I left my home—and my larger home, my country. This honour—this principle, is so like what is practised in England.” His eye resting a moment on the downcast countenance of Alfa, he seemed to remember he was only protracting her pain, and at the same time dilating on his own : he therefore, after another farewell, galloped out of sight.

“ That man is a specious man,” said Angelica to Alfa. “ Mark me, he is not what he seems : depend on it he has committed some terrible crime—worse than what we suppose : banishment, perhaps, from his native land is the punishment inflicted on him. How glad I am he is gone !”

To this remark Alfa made no reply, for

her heart was alike disturbed by Welitz's confession of his guilt, as it was by the agony of an *eternal separation*. To her Welitz was far from being specious or deceitful; if he was guilty, he acknowledged it, and did not attempt to betray or deceive her; and this she embodied with delusive force and power, little remembering how fallacious every hope must be which related to him. But Alfa, with true dignity of mind, forbore to allow dejection to prey upon her mind; she thought as well of Welitz as circumstances would permit; she imagined him not a being enshrouded in blood or crime—one whom misfortune persecuted, and sorrow marked for its own—one who had fallen from virtue, and never recovered the horror such a fall occasioned—one at least deserving pity—for love she must not give.

Welitz shut himself up at the Lodge, a prey to discontent and gloom: the world only seemed to cheat him, by holding forth visions of bliss he must never enjoy

—bright fields of promise *he* must never traverse—" Scenes of joy, and days of peace," which *he* could not hope to ever possess.

Half a mile from the Lodge was a rapid river, which was then not frozen over; thither Welitz one evening repaired; and as with the heavy step of care he paced along the banks, ruminating on never-to-be-forgotten events which rushed into his memory, he discerned at a distance a man, apparently watching his motions: he stopped—the man stopped also.—" Friend!" said Welitz, in Russian; and the man, as if conscious he was then observed, hurried out of sight, without making any sort of reply.

When Ferdinand Bruhl had made the Lodge his chief residence, he had amused himself by planning and building a grotto: it yet remained in part, and was but a hundred yards from the spot where Welitz was. The man had disappeared in that direction, which made him feel anxious to ascertain if he had not made that

his place of refuge; he therefore struck into the path leading to it, and a few minutes brought him to the spot. All was silence within, and Welitz, as he pushed open the door, saw the grotto was empty and tenantless, and would have left it that moment, had not the name of "*Alfa*" been carved on the wall, which he remembered she had written when they had last visited that place.—“There can be no harm,” he said, “in putting my own below it;” and taking out his knife, he wrote—“Welitz, or *the unfortunate Englishman*;” and with a rapidity of thought, and strength of imagination, for which he had once been justly famed when in England, he added the following brief lines:—

“Look on these words, and if they breathe
The sullen impulse of despair,
Think from a guilty wretch they come,
The sad bequest of grief and care.

“Look on these lines, and trace the thought
Which guides the hand to carve them here;
Think they are bound, and madly fraught
By wo of him who sheds no tear.

"For crimes which darken, as the night
Sweeps from the day the sunbeam's ray,
So he has felt—has mourned the light,
Which now has withered far away.

"Oh, there are crimes, which penance heals—
Oh, there are sins *can* be forgiven;
But mine are dark, and as time steals,
I shiver at the eye of Heaven!"

Welitz having traced these lines on the wall, sought to leave the spot; and as the evening was calm, he returned to the banks of the river, determined to pursue his course homewards by its side.

The moon was slowly rising, and as the river flowed on beneath its lucid ray, Welitz folded his arms in his mantle, and stood by it, watching its passing current. Footsteps behind him aroused him from this attitude; but before he had time to ascertain who it was, a man powerfully grasped his arm.—"What do you want?" demanded Welitz, in sudden and powerful emotion, at the same time wrestling himself from the stranger's hand.

"Your life!"

"My life!" said Welitz, in ALARM—

“why—and wherefore? Remember I am unarmed. Surely I remember something of your habit—is it not Tobolski?”

The man made no reply, but by darting with all his strength at Welitz, and endeavouring to thrust him into the river: firmly clasped in each other's arms, they hovered on the banks; sometimes Welitz stood as it were on the brink of eternity—at others his companion, and it was evident whoever fell into the stream, would drag the other with him: but this fearful tragedy was prevented by the sudden interposition of an individual, who sprung to the assistance of Welitz, at the same time exclaiming—“Welitz, here is your old friend Howitzer, come opportunely enough it seems.” Welitz found the grasp of his antagonist less powerful, and in a moment, by a movement most strongly powerful, the man wrenched himself from both their grasps, and swiftly disappeared amid the falling darkness of the scenery.

“Well,” said Howitzer, laughing—“I

left them all well at St. Petersburg, and Ferdinand sends his best regards, and wants you there again; and I, for my own part, wish you would not bury yourself here; besides, this fellow, whoever he is, has a decided wish to rid you of your life, and had I not come, I verily believe I should have heard you were no more.—How uncommonly that man resembles Tobolski !”

“ Yes; but what animosity can he have against *me* ?” said Welitz.

“ Jealousy,” said Howitzer—“ perhaps —”

“ Well, but Ferdinand Bruhl carries off the prize; and though *I* was once in the way, now I am as much disappointed as ever he was.”

“ Did you not once say you could win any woman from Tobolski ?” said Howitzer.

“ I believe I did.”

“ Ah—well, that is sufficient, if he heard it; so come, let us go to the Lodge, for, between you and I, this is no pleasant

place, and I shall expire with cold if I remain here. Above all, let me hope you have not been too much at Velina?"

Welitz, in some dismay, inquired the motive of the question.

"Love," said Howitzer, laughing. "I saw a beautiful girl, by name Angelica, who won my affections—(for Alfa is too shy—too timid for me)—*she* lives at Velina; I never made her an offer; but I am now come to do so, if you have no objection; and, to tell you the truth, some weeks since, when she was at St. Petersburg with her aunt, she gave me some encouragement; therefore I do not fear a refusal."

"I wish you success!" said Welitz. "Angelica has a bold, decided spirit, but a good heart."

"Nevertheless," said Howitzer, "I have some qualms concerning my fortune—I have played deep lately; but I solemnly renounce it for ever—that is, if she will have me; I see my folly, and it is one step towards the cure of a disease to know it."

"Granted," said Welitz: "though my own days are darkened—though my own visions of happiness are blighted, yet do I wish you and Ferdinand Bruhl all the bliss mortals can enjoy; as for myself, I deserve none; and I know not that I ought not to rejoice, when I experience any new ill or misfortune, as it may be earthly penance for earthly crime.—Look on me, Howitzer, and see if there be one lineament you can approve—look to my *hand*!"

Howitzer caught a view of his companion's countenance—it bore evident marks of insane grief—the force of conscience, and at the same time was scathed by some violent pressure of guilt, into which he felt he had no right to inquire.

CHAPTER VIII.

What is't—a drug?—————

Ply well the cups—see there be none left ;

Oh, let them drain them deep—deep—deep !

GRUNDFÖRD'S *Plays*.

.....

Oh, if I live—oh, if I live,

My father's death revenged shall be !”

Auld Song.

HOWITZER, on naming his return to be fixed at only the distance of a few days, was somewhat surprised to hear Welitz mention his wish of returning with him : the concern on his countenance might be attributed to feelings of sympathy for Welitz ; for he well knew the nuptial rites of young count Bruhl were drawing near—the day had been fixed some time, and it was one of singular import to the count's family, being the birthday of the bridegroom.

“ I should almost fear this Welitz,” said Angelica to Howitzer, as they were conversing together the evening before his intended departure.—“ Why should he seek to damp the general joy by his presence?—why intrude, when all ought to be happiness and peace? It strikes me,” she said, “ he is forming a scheme of cool and deliberate vengeance, which we all this time have been mistaking for grief.”

Howitzer appeared unwilling to think with Angelica; though he was constrained to admit his determination of visiting St. Petersburg, when he was aware the family wished him not to be there, had no very auspicious appearance.—“ In confidence to you, Angelica,” said her lover, “ here is a piece of paper I found yesterday; guessing it to be of no peculiar import, I was going to throw it into the fire; but my eye caught these words, which are of that import which impels me to keep them.”

He read—“ *You*, who know me (the

only being in the world who does), can guess *why* I go to St. Petersburg. Ferdinand and his father must——” (Here the paper was torn). “You cannot be surprised at my wish, and I am sure you will continue to keep my secret.”

“I shall keep a strict watch over Welitz,” said Howitzer; “but let me entreat you, whatever are your suspicions, to keep them confined to your own bosom; if he wears a mask, it *must* one day fall off.”

Consequently, Angelica trusted to Howitzer’s penetration for the Bruhls’ safety; though a thought often darted into her heart, that a man so desperate as Welitz seemed to be, was not to be guarded against, and she was convinced he meant to murder; what else could the paper mean, which said, “*Ferdinand and his father must——*” die was undoubtedly the next word; and a thousand times she cautioned Howitzer never to permit Welitz to do the count or his son any injury.

Welitz, on his return to St. Petersburg, was hailed with joy by his generous bene-

factor and his son—immediately instituted into a suit of apartments for his sole use, and could bear the presence of Catherina without pain or embarrassment. He seemed to take a pleasure in listening to the lover's praises of his bride, and not unfrequently joined in them; but Howitzer kept a steadfast eye on him, which Welitz seemed impatient of, though he dared not name it to him. He once called him "his shadow—his tormenting shadow," and added—"Howitzer, pray do not follow me every where—what do you mean by it?"

"Nothing," said Howitzer, embarrassed.

"Then do not do it—it is displeasing to me. Count Bruhl honours me with a visit to-night, as does his son—I am angry with you, and will not ask you to be of the party—they take coffee with me."

"Very well—good-night. If we should fight, do not let it be till after the wedding."

Howitzer smiled—Welitz *did not*, and they separated.

It was a meeting for the last time between these *dear* friends, and one in which candour and generosity was blended. Count Bruhl, happy in the idea of his son's union with the woman of his heart, charmed all human affairs were passing on so smoothly, was open, free, and communicative; whilst the young count was too thoughtful to converse much, and Welitz seemed more than usually grave, and more than usually disturbed.

"Surely," said count Bruhl, "there is a peculiar taste in this coffee—is not yours the same, Ferdinand?"

"Precisely so.—Welitz, how is yours?" said the young count.

"I have not tasted any," he replied; "for I have had a sick headach all day, and am advised not to take what is clogging to my stomach or rich."

Both the young count and his father fixed their eyes on Welitz, with an expression of which they themselves were not aware; but, at the time, it was uncontrollable and natural.

The young count emptied his cup into a basin which stood on the tray, and looked attentively at the bottom of it, to observe if there were any particles adhering to it. There were some light grains of an unctuous white powder, which he perceived mixed with the coffee; and fixing a stern eye on Welitz, he reached his hand to the bell, and on a servant's appearing, he said—"Go for a surgeon—we are POISONED!"

"I feel exactly as I did when I was at Amsterdam," said the old count—"I *am* poisoned, and by WHOM will be quickly known."

Welitz, powerless and thunderstruck, stood by the stove, neither offering help, or uttering a syllable.

"Welitz!" said Ferdinand, and his voice was loud and terrible, "do you coolly let us die?—Run for a surgeon—give my father an antidote, to undo that which some BASE wretch has done!"

"Secure him," said the old count, faintly. "I *had* a warning—but I disbelieved

it—*he* is the man.—I ~~am~~ sick and faint—open—open the window, that I may get air.—How this burns and tortures me! and you—you, my son, are *very* pale.—Look, Welitz, on your victims, and shudder!”

“I shudder,” said Welitz, coming forward to support him, “not at my guilt, but at your sufferings. I am innocent, as Heaven is my judge!”

“Swear not!” said Ferdinand, “rather fly—yes fly!—You once saved me, but—yes—you shall go!”

“I will never leave you,” said Welitz, kneeling down, and supporting the head of the old count, “unless it be to bring help; if you require that at my hands, then indeed will I go.”

“A surgeon then, and that speedily!” said Ferdinand. “Here are all the symptoms of mortal poison!—Oh, my dear father, must we part at the very moment of all our earthly happiness!”

Welitz met the surgeon on the stairs, and flying to the apartment where the dy-

ing count was, he arrived just in time to see him breathe his last sigh in the arms of his son.

Whoever had administered the poison, it had been sure and fatal in its effects; and the young count seemed to be nearly in the same state as his father; his countenance changed to a ghastly white, and then was covered with a livid hue; and it was with extreme difficulty the surgeon administered an antidote, for the potency of the poison was such, as left but small chance of a remedy being effectual. Ferdinand had only taken part of his cup of coffee; whilst his father had emptied his to within a few drops; he therefore experienced less danger and agony, and could give commands, one of which was, his cousin Howitzer should be immediately sent for—the other, that Welitz might retire.

“No,” said the young Englishman, “you must not expect I will quit you, until you are pronounced out of danger.”

“Take him from my sight!” said the

young count, in a tone of detestation; and prudence only made him withhold the words, "he is the murderer of my father."

Welitz was consequently forced from the room, at the door of which he met Howitzer.—"Surely," said he, struggling to catch him by the arm, "however appearances are against me, *you* will not condemn me; let me have an opportunity of clearing myself from the odium of this terrible crime—the murder of my benefactor and his son. You can vouch for me—you can——" They dragged him away ere he could finish his sentence, and he had only time to observe Howitzer's countenance expressive of horror and astonishment. He raised his voice; Howitzer heard him, but rushed into the apartment where the young count lay. He was extended on a sofa, with his face downward; so Howitzer did not immediately perceive what effect the poison had had; but a shiver of pain, scarcely endurable, made him start convulsively round, and discern his cousin at his bedside.

"They tell me I may recover," he said, faintly; "in case I should not, you, Howitzer, are the heir to all my possessions—the small hunting lodge at Wolki to be given to Catherina Dolgorucki——"

"Whom do you suspect of this terrible crime?" asked Howitzer, interrupting him.

"A viper we cherished in our bosoms—a man we once loved, though his life had been darkened by crime—one who has stung us to the heart—WELITZ!" said the young count.

Howitzer expressed no surprise, nor gave one symptom of astonishment.—"I expected this," he said, "and till lately—till this very evening, I kept my eye close upon him—he quarrelled with me for so doing, and to-night told me *I* should not take coffee with him, because I had been and was 'his shadow.'"

"See he does not escape," said Ferdinand, half raising himself from his pillow—"justice must be done, and the life of a parent must not go unpunished. He saved my life, and I confess myself unwilling to

take his; but my poor father! the man who cherished him, and once loved him as he did me—he who saved him from poverty, to be basely murdered! oh, it shall not be borne!—it cannot be borne! but cries aloud for vengeance!”

“ Let it then have vengeance,” said Howitzer. “ Though my uncle hated me (and once, by my follies and extravagance, I deserved that hate), yet I loved *him*. Welitz is secured—let him be examined, and have a just trial; at the same time, death in its most horrible shape, is too good for such a monster of depravity! Let us secure his papers, and not proceed on circumstantial evidence alone; yet there cannot exist a shadow of his innocence.”

Welitz, the favourite of count Bruhl, and Welitz accused of murdering his benefactor, rang from mouth to mouth; the very people who had praised him to the skies, were the first to execrate his name, and revile his character; others silently let the law and justice decide for them, only hazarding the remark,—“ Where is

the wretched young man?—for wretched he must be, innocent or guilty.”

“ Oh,” was the answer, “ I saw the monster in a hack *drojodka* yesterday going to prison ; he looked very terrible—very pale—with guilt no doubt. The young count Bruhl is gone to speak with him this morning ; but the wretch persists in his asseverations of innocence.”

“ Ah, indeed !” said one.

“ Yes. He will meet with but little mercy or pity, for the circumstances are attended with horrible aggravations ; I wish he may suffer a most cruel death, and shall certainly crowd myself into the Hall of Justice to hear his trial !” said the other.

“ And I,” said the first speaker, “ would not see him condemned for the world, for I once danced with him at a court ball, and he interested me much.”

“ Oh, but did you never hear he was guilty of murder in his own country, before he came hither ?”

“ Some crime I heard, but not decidedly the nature of it.”

Young count Bruhl (or rather count Bruhl) was indeed gone to visit Welitz in his prison; it cost him much to bear the interview, more particularly as he had once saved his life; but he deemed it the most advisable plan to have some conversation with him previous to his trial. He chose the morning for his visit, when the weakness of the light through the gloomy dungeon, might hide the ghastly face of the prisoner from his view. In this he was disappointed, for as Welitz was not yet condemned, he was permitted pens, ink, paper, and a lamp, and it was by the feeble ray of its light, the count caught a view of the countenance of the murderer. He was confined to the wall by a large chain, locked round his waist; yet it was of sufficient length to enable him to seat himself on a chair opposite a table, on which lay the apparatus for writing; his eyes were melancholy and thoughtful—his appearance disturbed and agitated—his dress discomposed, and the influence of fear and terror seemed alter-

nately to possess his mind. The noise made in unlocking his door, made him hastily turn round to discover who was the intruder, and a faint colour darted to his cheek as he beheld Ferdinand.—“ I am preparing for my trial,” he said, endeavouring to speak composed ; “ it takes place, I find, in a short time ;” and he ceased to speak.

“ It does. Are you not guilty of the deed ?” was the question.

“ No ! nor do I know who is, as Heaven is my witness !”

“ You persist in that,” said Ferdinand.

“ I do ; neither have I the least suspicion who was the monster : man may, from the influence of evidence, accuse, condemn, and punish *me* for the murder ; but to a higher tribunal I shall look for justice. By the misery of a bleeding and a broken heart—by all the shame, the infamy, the disgrace, into which I am plunged, I swear I am ignorant how the poison came into the cups ! Could you—can you suppose me so lost to all that is good, pure, or vir-

trous, to murder two beings, whom I have said I would die to serve, and in so advancing said no more than the truth?—Look on me—do I look like a villain, or a murderer—at least as if I could murder my *friend*?”

Ferdinand slightly raised his eyes to those of the prisoner; and as he said in reply—“No, you do not *look* like a murderer,” he saw a faint, sickly, wan smile pass over his lips, vanishing as it came; it seemed one which expressed contempt at his ignorance, and gratification that he had deceived him.

“This is the last time we may meet—at least as we now are,” said count Brühl—“I charge you deceive me not, and on the day of trial, you shall find it shall fare better for you; though you are before me a fearful, terrible homicide—darkened by crimes you will not reveal, and an everlasting stain upon your name and conscience—I cannot forget past services; your accommodation cannot, according to law,

be bettered, but your food and your fire shall be more desirable."

"I wish for none of these," said Welitz, seizing his pen. "Perhaps you will not refuse to see this letter conveyed to the nearest post-office? for there exists a being whose heart will burst when she hears of my fate: she shall not hear of it by common report; but the hand which has not touched hers for years, shall send the last lines I may be permitted to write, to say farewell! it is a short word—soon given, and mine a short pang when I die. There are indeed pangs afterwards—'fires unquenchable'—'worms which dieth not,' and torments everlasting and dreadful! These are what men shiver at, when guilt hovers over them."

A sudden frenzy seized Welitz as he spoke, and with delirious agony he clasped his hands over his face, and for a moment count Bruhl heard nothing but a sort of convulsive sobbing.

But a minute only was expended in these intense starts of feeling. Welitz re-

moved his hands from his face—looked at count Bruhl, and then was calm—took up his pen, and wrote a few lines, which he folded up, and gave it into the hands of his companion—“ Seal it,” he said, “ and let it not be delayed, for I dread—but no matter—now let us part.”

Count Bruhl, with firmness and composure, prepared to take his leave of the prisoner, whose wan countenance and disordered manners, half persuaded him he was not in his senses. Welitz seemed to imagine such were his ideas, by his assiduity in removing from him all instruments of a dangerous tendency.

“ Spare yourself *that* trouble,” he said—“ you may trust me—I am not disordered in my fancy, or wandering in my mind; my thoughts are wild; and is it so strange, accused of a fatal, a horrid crime—in all human probability, one for which I must forfeit my life—is it so strange, I ask, that I should chill at the terror of impending death? an illspent—misspent life, oh! who shall pass by calmly? At the end of

only a few days, I must perish! for who will believe the innocence of a man who has nothing to clear him—no friends—no one to whom, in this last conflict, he can apply for a redeeming word? Oh! the grave is dark—is dim—is cold, where, if all is one sleep till the judgment day, how shall we abide it? how shall we stand, confessedly guilty of crimes many and terrible? Think of this, and then tell me if I can look on approaching death with a calm and steady eye?”

“Look well to your prisoner,” said Ferdinand, as he went out, “and give him all the indulgence you possibly can.” The gaoler promised so to do, and he returned home.

CHAPTER IX.
~~~~~

—————And I a thing  
O'er which the vulture flaps her wing.      BYRON.

It was at an early hour the grand court of justice at St. Petersburg was crowded to excess: the uncommon interest excited by the approaching trial, the high rank of count Bruhl, and the awful circumstances relative to his death, were subjects and matter of curiosity to every one. Some endeavoured to force a passage by main strength—others profited by their exertions—others were nearly crushed to pieces against the door of entrance; and one or two contented themselves by thinking it was impossible to enter, and quietly returned home. The great door being unfastened, a rush, vast and tremendous, ensued: every one struggled for good places, where they might see and hear; and be-

fore the counsel arrived, or the judge made his appearance, the hall was so immensely full, as to deny the probability of room sufficient being left for those ministers of the law to pursue their offices. The judge, in a long black robe, took his seat in a dark pontifical kind of chair, directly opposite where the prisoner was to be stationed, and a dead silence followed the command which was issued, that "Welitz (for by no other name was he known) was to come before the assembly, charged with poisoning his friend, his benefactor, and his preserver." A dead silence again prevailed—when the prisoner, as if emerging from the earth, step by step, appeared slowly moving from a chasm which led to the cell in which he had been confined.

The first eyes which seemed to look on him with any degree of mercy, were those of one whom he little expected to see present at such a place—Elizabeth Dolgorucki! He had scarcely withdrawn his from hers, when he was asked, in a voice

of pity—"Whether he was guilty of the crime alleged against him or not?"

"I am *not*!" he answered; and turning to see who it was thus addressed him, he perceived it was a person to whom he was an utter stranger.

The judge, eyeing the criminal for some time, addressed him on the heinousness of his crime—explained the circumstances relative to the murder—and concluded by asking the prisoner why he should attempt to deny that which it was but too evident he had committed?

"I knew not of the poison being in the cups," said Welitz: "as Heaven is merciful, I had not the least wish to deprive two beings of life, for whom, God knows, I would have perilled my own!"

"It is remarkable you drank none yourself," said a young advocate (for the examination of a criminal in Russia is far different to what it is in England).

"No: my reasons I have given in writing, during my private examinations," said the prisoner.

“ You have: at the same time it is also worthy remark, you that evening quarrelled with Howitzer Bruhl, a nephew of the deceased, in order, most probably, to further your designs on the two beings ‘ for whom you would have perilled your life.”

The prisoner looked up, and around, as if searching for Howitzer, and not perceiving him any where present, he exclaimed—“ Howitzer had watched me—closely watched me: I disliked it; and partly in earnest, I confess I told him I would not ask him to take coffee with me that night, but with no sinister intention.”

“ You put the sugar into the cups?”

“ I did.”

“ Did you perceive any thing at the bottom?”

“ No: I am rather near-sighted,” said the prisoner.

The court laughed.

“ Since you are so near-sighted,” said the same young advocate, “ you will not perhaps acknowledge this handwriting to be yours?”

Welitz raised his eyes, and perceived a box of his, in which his private papers were enclosed, had been opened, and the contents doubtless read. The paper handed to him, he immediately knew was a memorandum he had made on the pounding of a hard and poisonous drug, called *Monaagna*, which he remembered to have been given him by a friend. The advocate read it; and also the surgeon, who opened the body of count Bruhl, testified his death was caused by the *monaagna*, the pounding of which required immense trouble. The prisoner was here again convicted.

“Did you pound any of that drug?” said the young advocate.

“I did, for the purpose of trying an experiment on varnishing pictures: I locked it carefully up, keeping the key in my pocket, fearing harm might ensue if it were left carelessly about. No one was intrusted with that key.”

“Granted: but here is a paper which, though ambiguous, seems to darken your

innocence at once.—‘Whosoever shed man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed. *I am guilty.* Oh, do I not equally with the midnight assassin deserve death?’ Again.—‘The grave is surely terrible, but how dreadful to one burthened with a foul crime!’

“This is confession,” said the young advocate; and again thrusting his hand into the box, he dragged forth some papers, in which the pounded poison had evidently been laid, some of which yet adhered to it; and on being compared with that found in the coffee cups, was proved to be the same. After this, the advocate read a letter, half torn, which appeared written under the sublime power of religion, to appease the agony of a guilty conscience.

The prisoner was remanded back for another examination—told to prepare his defence—to collect friends and witnesses in his favour, and to appear again in an hour.

"I have no witnesses in my favour—no friends," he replied; "and since my doom appears, and is, I am *aware*, inevitable, God forbid my trial should take up your and my time! The strange and eventful circumstances around me can plead nothing in my favour—for mystery is crime. I am innocent of poisoning my benefactor, and attempting the life of his son; for where is the benefit which would accrue to me by such a fatal act?"

"Were you not instigated by jealousy, and were you not aware that a large portion of count Bruhl's property would devolve on you, in case of his decease, and that of his son?"

"I was; but lately that plan was changed."

"And when you retired to Wolki, did you not indulge in dreams of vengeance and despair?"

"I did indulge in despair; but it was not the loss of fortune which promoted it. As to vengeance, it never entered my heart."



"No one enters the room, but yourself, where that box now before us usually stands?" was the next interrogation.

"No one: it is a small apartment, entirely private, of which I kept the key."

"He condemns himself," said the advocate; and the judge, actuated by the many circumstances which pressed on him to convict the prisoner, advanced that he was guilty, and must suffer.

A paper from Elizabeth Dolgorucki was thrown to the prisoner, on which was written—"Demand another examination—*you have a friend!*" The prisoner immediately made known his intention and wish, which was not granted, the time of the court having been already fully given him—and *sentence of death was passed!*

"To the dungeon with me!" he said to the gaoler—"quick!" and with hasty feet he hurried down the steps to the cell, which he would quit no more, till he was to receive his last and painful punishment.

It was considerably past the hour of

midnight, and most of the church clocks had warned the prisoner how fast time was fleeting away, and how speedily it was bearing him on to the verge of punishment—long forgotten scenes rushed into his memory—visions of his country and his home—dreams, in which his parents, his friends, appeared to him in the bright hue of departed pleasure and innocence—the thought of perishing by a lengthened and cruel death—far from all he loved, it made him shudder, and pass his hand across his pallid forehead, with an agony of feeling not to be described.

“Prisoner—prisoner!” said a voice, the accent of which was not familiar to him—  
“awake!”

“I have not slept,” he said, starting up.

“Nor have I these three nights past,” said the female, lowering her voice.

Welitz looked up, and perceived, by the flittering rays of the lamp which stood on the small table, a woman, young, but neither attractive nor prepossessing, wrapped in a large mantle, the hood of which

shaded her countenance, and protected her from the cold.—“ You, who are so soon to perish, by sufferings most exquisite—you who have no hope for mercy *now*, will not surely die with a falsehood on your lips!” she advanced: “ tell me then if you are not guilty?—swear it by an oath, great and terrible; and according as you speak truth, so will I deal with you—for your life is in my hands.”

“ By all my hopes hereafter—by the mercy I entreat of a great and merciful God, I am INNOCENT! Yet I acknowledge the appearances against me are very strong—*they* have criminated me: but if I perish, my blood be not on the heads of those who condemned me, but the real murderer!” said Welitz, in a deep and awful tone.

“ And have you no suspicion who the man is?” inquired the female, in a tremulous emotion.

“ None.”

“ Did no one ever seek your ruin, when you stood high in the favour of count

Bruhl, and his son was supposed to be no more?"

"My life was once attempted, before I came to St. Petersburg, in a forest, close by the Lodge at Wolki; but my confidence I gave to no one."

"No one entered your rooms—at least the room Elizabeth Dolgorucki has told me you called your private apartment, where the poison was in the box?"

"No; no one could: but may I ask, who it is has this singular interest in my fate? the voice and the figure are equally unknown to me."

The female pulled the hood closer over her countenance, and at once replied—"You never before saw me, nor I you: it is not for yourself I am interested; for I am told you were branded with crime before you were accused of this. But, oh! let justice be done, and I am satisfied: demand another trial, and it shall fare better for you."

"I have already done so, and have been denied."

"I have power, and can persuade those in whose hands your fate is to admit it."

"But of what use is it to me, who can prove nothing?"

"But *I* can prove," said the female, with some force.

"Strange, and unaccountable!" said the prisoner, lifting up his eyes to his companion. "But as dying men, in their last extremity, catch at straws, so do I in this fearful strife anxiously hope for what is perhaps not to be attained: convicted by circumstantial evidence, and that palpable and clear, there is but little chance."

"Avail yourself of that chance."

"I would gladly; but without friends, and the circumstances of crime so singularly atrocious, I cannot."

"You shall have a trial," interrupted the female: "whatever have been your past crimes, it is not just you suffer for one you do not merit. But mark! the sacrifice is great on my side, and for ever sullies a name—but time presses, and I must depart. I will meet you in the hall

of justice—I will procure you another trial, and I will preserve you from punishment!”

The prisoner raised his chained hands to press those of the female—which done, she hastily left the cell, the gaoler closing the door after her: and so rapidly had this passed, that he for a moment imagined it was the wreck only of some fantastic dream; but when the morning came, and he really beheld himself on his way to the grand hall of justice for another trial, he felt some symptoms of joy and hope that perhaps he might *yet* be saved.

“ If wretches can feel pleasure,  
Pleasure he did feel;  
Or as much happiness  
As they can know.”

The hall was even more thronged, if possible, than on the preceding day; and when the prisoner raised his eyes up, he beheld present, Ferdinand, Elizabeth Dolgorucki, and Howitzer; the paleness on his countenance was reflected on theirs, and the misery with which he was tor-

tured, seemed to be equally felt by them.

"I am told," said the judge to the prisoner, when all was still and composed, "that you are this day to have witnesses in your favour, and that one is now about to appear: why were they not called yesterday, and why did you deny having them?"

"I knew not I had a friend," said the prisoner, mournfully, "till last night."

"Where is that friend?" demanded the judge, looking round.

"HERE!" said a voice, at which the whole court turned round, to observe the speaker—"HERE!"

"Do you know any thing of the prisoner?" inquired the counsel, after a pause.

"Nothing:" and as the man spoke, Howitzer, leaning from the side of Ferdinand Bruhl, perceived a man of sullen, squalid aspect, in a coarse dress, pushing forward towards the witnesses' box.

"At least you are aware whose cause you are vindicating, or rather about to

vindicate?" said the counsel, speaking to the man in the coarse dress.

"No—I know nothing of him," raising his eyes—"I never saw him before; but I know who did the deed—I know who attempted the life of the prisoner now at the bar, when he was at a hunting lodge, some leagues from St. Petersburg—I know who, by false keys, false words, and other contrivances, has basely murdered the old count Bruhl, and endeavoured to lay the guilt on another."

"And who was that being?" said the judge, with some haste in his accents, and curiosity of manner.

"HOWITZER BRUHL!" was the reply.



## CHAPTER X.

Speak; for in those eyes I see  
Marks of kindness meant for me :  
Dry thy tears, and calm thy brow,  
Ere thou weepest for my wo ;  
For hast thou far forgot the time,  
When I dyed my soul with crime? *Author.*

ALL eyes were immediately turned to look for the accused ; but the place where he stood was vacated : as soon as the features of the witness became known to him, he had darted out of the hall of justice, without a moment's delay. This very circumstance seemed to confirm his guilt.

“ And by what circumstances,” said the judge, “ do you accuse Howitzer Bruhl of the crime ? ”

“ By his conferences with me, and my brother, and by the testimony of my own eyes. It is now more than two years since,

that Howitzer Bruhl was one night walking by the sea-shore at Oranien; he met my brother and myself, Smoliff and Alexander Fontes: we were then in a state of poverty, and, to say the truth, were inclined to do any thing for money: he walked past us several times before he spoke, and seemed examining our features; it was moonlight, and he asked us whether we were fishermen? We said—‘No, we wanted employment.’ He asked—‘What sort of employment?’ We said—‘Any thing.’—‘You want money?’ We said—‘We did.’ After some demur, he asked us to meet him there the following day, when he would talk with us. We met him, and he then exclaimed—‘I want to get rid of a young man who hinders me of a great fortune; if you will assist me, you shall never know want again.’ We promised: my brother had a stronger heart than I.—‘My plan,’ says he, ‘is this: over a small, but deep, canal, a mile from my house at Oranien, hangs the bough of a tree: I wish you to saw it

nearly in halves, close to the stem; when you have so done, leave it: but keep your secret, and this money.' He gave us some gold, as an earnest of his intentions, and we proceeded to work, and did as he had commanded us.

"We saw him at a small hut, where we took up our abode, the day after, when he told us his plan had not succeeded—we must try one yet more desperate. I hung back, but my brother consented. He told us, in a short time (he would let us know when), he should want us to waylay the young man in a forest: we were not to kill him, unless he resisted very much. It was the forest of St. Hildebrand, some leagues up the road, towards the boundary of Russia: we were to avoid wounding the guide, and not to heed the arms they carried, as *he should take care of them*. By this we understood, he would guard against their injuring us. On the appointed time we stationed ourselves in the forest—completed our purpose; though my brother shot the servant of the young

count through his heart before we left. To a lone cottage we took the count, where we were told to confine him till he died, alternately keeping watch: we were to drop hints it was Onillia, a female, who was the cause of his imprisonment; and I remained at the cottage with him and my sister till he escaped, when my brother was at St. Petersburg, performing some other deed for his employer."

"It was your brother then who attempted to murder this young man at Wolki, count Bruhl's hunting lodge?"

"Yes—supposing him to be the promised heir."

"Who told you this?"

"My brother himself! He added also, he was to be Howitzer Bruhl's own confidential servant. It was he who confessed to me, he had carried various anonymous and mysterious letters, respecting the young count Welitz, to count Dolgorucki's, and count Bruhl's; that he obtained the impression of keys, in wax, by which he had others made to a box, into

which the prisoner had laid poison, and to the room also in which that box stood; that he knew to a moment when the house was most clear, and that he saw Howitzer Bruhl unlock the closet where the cups were, and put some into three of them; he then closed it, saying—‘All will soon be over, and I shall be able to pay my gaming debts; these people none of them will be in my way long.’

“And who are you,” interrogated the judge, “who have thus turned accuser on Howitzer Bruhl?”

“Alexander Fontes,” said the witness.

“And where is Smoliff, your brother?” said the judge.

“In a place of concealment; but now, in all probability, no more; for it was as he thought death approaching that he confessed himself the tool in poisoning the deceased count Bruhl and his son.”

“You, Alexander Fontes,” said the judge, “by your own confession, are an objectionable and bad character; we must therefore be careful how we give credence

to your words. You say that the prisoner is not guilty; and it was doubtless through you that high interest was exerted to procure him another trial. You must remain in confinement until all is cleared. Howitzer Bruhl is sent for to his house; he will be examined—he also will be questioned; for it is our wish to do justice. In case, therefore, you have any more to say, let it now be told us, for this is a case of extreme peril and danger.”

“It was not through me,” said Alexander Fontes, “that another trial was procured, but only in part through my information.” And he looked round the court of justice, as if in expectation some one was there who would authorize what he said; and the prisoner, together with many others, perceived him to rest his eyes with some satisfaction on a female, who was standing at the extremity of the hall, supported by several persons of rank, and evidently one of the Dolgorucki party.

“We then,” said the judge, “desire to know whatever else can be told us of this

unfortunate affair; whatever source (if a correct one) it springs from, cannot but be acceptable to us and justice."

"I then," said a voice, which Welitz immediately recognised as belonging to the female who had visited him the evening previous in prison, "attest the truth of what Alexander Fontes has advanced—Howitzer Bruhl is indeed guilty!"

"And what name," said the judge, with some respect in his manner to her whom he addressed, "are we to insert, as belonging to the second witness in the prisoner's favour?"

A slight pause followed.

"That of Onillia Bruhl!" said the voice again.

A violent emotion pervaded the breasts of every one present, and a chill darted into the hearts of many who were unaccustomed to yield to sudden feeling. A sister accusing a brother, was at once revolting to human nature; and the stagnant proceedings of the court evinced how much horror was created by the avowal of Onil-

lia. But these sentiments changed, when, after a violent struggle against the power of her grief and the influence of her tears, she addressed the judge in the following terms.

“With what agony I appear before you, and all here assembled on this terrible occasion, I need not (nor could I if required) describe. To be the accuser of my brother, is a severe and terrible trial; but I could not let the innocent perish, when I possessed the means of preserving his life.”

A cry was here heard of—“Bring the guilty to justice!—the wretch is caught!” which interrupted the words of Onillia, whose frenzied looks, and agonized expressions of—“Oh, Heavens!—in mercy grant it may not be my brother!” evinced sufficiently her distress at the idea of his suffering for the crime. Amid the struggling, she plainly perceived a cloak belonging to her brother; but the crowd was so immense, and pressed with such great curiosity to the place where the confusion



was, as prevented her from ascertaining whether it was him or not.

“ They are officers of justice, however,” said she, seizing on Elizabeth Dolgorucki’s arm—“ there, that is my brother’s cap.”

Scarcely had she spoken these words before a calm came over the tumult; the struggling ceased, and a man standing up, in a loud voice from amid the crowd, exclaimed—

“ Howitzer Bruhl is before this safe; he left me in *his* clothes, and I deceived the officers of justice by pretending to be my master, and have thus rendered him the last service he ever will require of me; and for this act I humbly entreat pardon.”

Onillia, reanimated by this assurance, was some minutes before she could find words to continue her explanation; but the lackey being set free, and the hall of justice once more still and composed, she continued it in the following words.

“ It is something more than two years since my cousin, Ferdinand Bruhl, came

on a visit to my brother and myself, at Oranien. My brother had been rather unsteady, and had dissipated nearly all his property, which so pressed on his mind as made him eagerly anticipate the death of the very man whom he invited to his dwelling; he knew he, in all probability, would be his next heir, being his nearest, as well as his poorest relation. My cousin, Ferdinand Bruhl, was affected with a nervous and hypochondriacal complaint, which he endeavoured to overcome by excessive exercise and application of talent to study. My brother did not hesitate to say openly before me—‘I wish he might die; it would be such a fine thing for you and me.’—To which I sternly replied—‘God forbid I should desire the death of any one!’—He then hinted, if it was so, he should quit Oranien entirely—go to the Russian capital—have horses, amusements, and pleasures—and ‘set St. Petersburg on fire.’ He talked so much on this, that it seemed to influence all his better feeling; and I justly feared the arrival of Ferdinand

Bruhl, well knowing that his constitution would not be nursed by my brother—that he might yield to the cries of ambition, and be the victim of guilt. I therefore, when my cousin came, treated him with coolness—with indifference; and scrupled not to hint I wished he would not extend his stay to any great length. But my brother, whose manners pleased him, and powers of entertainment were by no means limited, contrived to make him like Oranien so well, that he passed some time with us; until he deemed it necessary for his return to be made, and preparations were consequently put in force. Howitzer could not meet my eyes during this preparation. When I asked him ‘if he was assured of the fidelity of the guide he had chosen,’ he said, ‘Yes;’ but in a hesitating and embarrassed voice. I expressed my fears of the forest of St. Hildebrand, and asked Ferdinand Bruhl myself, one day when he was ill, whether he took his route by Darien *and* that forest? He answered me in the affirmative, and I remember I

replied; ‘ Ah! well, that is sufficient;’ for he seemed to look as if he suspected *me*. My brother had by chance met me in one of my rambles, when he was conversing with two men; one of whom, Alexander Fontes, is now before us; he struck me, by a cut across the nose, as having seen service, and his sailor-like aspect convinced me he was accustomed to a hard and fatiguing life. My brother never mentioned them to me. When I heard my cousin was murdered, at first I was stupified with terror; I looked alternately at my brother, and then at the letter which my poor deceased uncle had written, to inform us he was no more; his servant was shot, his baggage had disappeared.—‘ Howitzer,’ said I, fixing my eyes on his, ‘ this is a strange tale;—my cousin murdered!—it seems impossible!—can it be that you know aught of the deed?’

‘ I!’—he trembled every limb—‘ I!—what will you suppose next?’

‘ Kneel down then,’ said I, ‘ and swear

an oath, great and terrible, that you are unconcerned.'

"He knelt, partly shading his face with his hands.

'And yet,' I exclaimed in an agony, 'I will not have you, through my means, run the risk of perjuring yourself for ever; only tell me, without one tremble, you are innocent, and I will try to believe you.'

'I *will* swear,' he said calmly, 'by all my hopes hereafter, Ferdinand Bruhl was not murdered through my means! bad, licentious, depraved as I am, spilling of blood is not yet marked down in my book of crime.'

"I believed him; I had great reason so to do; a man who has murdered, must sometimes hear the still small voice of conscience—he will sometimes yield to the dark power which guilt calls down; but Howitzer was gay, even to cheerfulness. I looked for the desponding hour, but none ever did I see. I married just before I heard of my cousin's sudden resur-

rection. I know not how Howitzer bore that, for he left me at Oranien alone, soon after the supposed murder of my cousin, and repaired to St. Petersburg; my husband and myself went to Paris, from whence we are just returned. Two nights since, as I was sitting by myself, in an apartment at the Tariendorf hotel, I saw a man standing in the street looking at me; he was apparently struck by some powerful remembrance, for, on retiring from the window, he came to the hotel door, and asked to see the lady who occupied such an apartment, describing it. My attendants permitted him to wait in the antichamber till they had told me his wishes, which were, that if I was 'Howitzer Bruhl's sister, he would gladly speak to me.' A feeling I cannot describe overpowered me at the moment; but let it suffice to say, I consented to see him; and my emotion became still more perceptible, when I perceived he had a cut across the nose, and was, in fact, the very man whom I had once encountered with my brother How-

itzer and another individual, at Oranien. His words were brief and few. He told me his brother was at the point of death, and could not depart until he had saved the life of a young man then going to be tried for a murder, which was not planned or even thought of by him; but he trusted that I, as sister to the real criminal, would prevent punishment falling on an innocent head. He then entered into a detail of what has just been said; which, alas! is by many circumstances confirmed, in fear and trembling, by me. I could yesterday have advanced what I did to-day, but let natural feelings of tenderness for a brother plead my delay; it was my wish he should escape; I knew, if I exerted my interest, another trial would be allowed, as I possess power and friends here; my friend Elizabeth Dolgorucki was my confidant in this; and it will afford me some melancholy pleasure to know justice is done. My brother I yesterday wrote to; I implored him to make his

escape; from some unaccountable reasons, he neglected so to do \*; perhaps the note never reached him, or if it did, he disdained to regard it. But, though he is branded with crime, there are links by which nature has bound us, which can never be by me broken asunder."

A pause followed this declaration; but it was only that the shout of vivid triumph which followed, on the safety of Welitz, should ring with greater power in the hall of justice. The prisoner was stripped of his chains; people who before would not have touched his hand for worlds, stooped down to shake it—to say, "God bless you! pray get into *my* sledge!"—or, "Here is *mine*!" with another smile and pull; or, "My drojedka is empty, get into that!"—and Ferdinand Bruhl rushed to Welitz himself, and clasped him in his arms with true Russian ardour.

"INNOCENT, INNOCENT! — ACQUITTED, ACQUITTED!" rang along the streets; and why was it that the prisoner was less

\* This was the case.



pleased than those who crowded round him, to hail him as "innocent?"—did he not well know he had no claim to that term?

## CHAPTER XI.

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WE must now return to England, which we have been obliged to leave for some time unnoticed; we will endeavour, therefore, to repair our omission, and, as briefly as we can, fall into a train of events which had occurred, in the period of a year, to the family of the Wycherlys.

Beatrice had been a constant correspondent to Susan, to whom she was more peculiarly attached than to her sister Mary; she had entered into her feelings with respect to her husband, she had seen his coldness, and foresaw all the miseries of an unhappy marriage at hand. Susan's replies

to her had been written at first in a grieved and melancholy strain, but, by degrees, the letters had assumed a more spirited cast; the "crushed worm" might turn again. One page in the last letter which she had received, when in Sweden, contained some passages, which roused her to a sense of what was likely to ensue. It was this:—

* * * * *

"I had once," says the writer, "a timid heart; but I have a friend, a *sincere* friend, who tells me, in a case like the present, it only is a field for oppression. I agree perfectly in this. You will ask who this adviser is? Fitzroy. His house is finished, and the distance precludes my seeing him every day, as I used to do; but still he comes four times a week, and as I am much alone, he spends his mornings with me. How well he reads—and how delightful must it be, to be the companion of a man such as he is! I can compare him to no one but William, when we *first* married.

" I *do* think I must leave my husband. Once Fitzroy advised me strongly not to think of such a thing ; but now he is silent on the subject. He feels for me, and is delicate enough to say nothing. What shall I do? I am CERTAIN of William's unfaithfulness. I see I am abhorred in his eyes ; and do you think, Beatrice, human nature *can* endure it? I never felt it so keenly as at this moment.

" Fitzroy called this morning ; my husband was gloomier than usual, and, for the first time in my life, it struck me he was jealous. With sudden resolution, as soon as my visitor was gone, I asked him, whether Fitzroy's visits were unpleasant to him?

' No,' he said, quickly ; ' Fitzroy is my friend.'

" We both paused ; and he then took occasion to tell me his father was very ill, and he was going over to Hethering to see him ; and, if I wished, I could accompany him. I did not wish, for my father-in-law always disliked *me*, because I had no for-

tune. An evil thought, too, respecting our journey, crossed my mind; I knew what an uncomfortable one it would be; and he is busy in preparation.

"I passed through his study an hour since; it was in some confusion; there were several letters in a female hand, into which I had the greatest possible curiosity to look. My honour, however, prevented me, and I was not sorry when I was out of the way of temptation.

"You see how I am circumstanced. I see no hopes of redress; and I am certain, should this state of feeling, which is now on me, continue long, it will drive me to desperation."

* * * * *

"Then followed some incoherent allusions, which gave Beatrice the most lively and anxious concern. Hints at "revenging herself" on her husband's unfaithfulness, by flirtation and caprice; for why *should* she suffer in silence?

Beatrice saw, by the epistle, the spirit was indeed roused to an alarming extent;

and she observed, when revenge was spoken of, Fitzroy seemed to be the tool intended to further her wishes. "My heart is not corrupted, think what you may," she advanced in her letter; "I will do no evil, but my husband shall see I will not suffer tamely; he shall not think I am the poor simple creature he may imagine."

She had prescribed herself bounds; but who shall say, "I will go thus far and no further?" who can set a boundary to sin? or, rather, who will presume to do it? and virtue is never so weak as when she triumphs.

These ideas rushed into Beatrice's mind, and she lost no time in sending a reply, fraught with advice, for the peril of so critical a time.—"It was," she said, "a severe trial, but it was apportioned to her strength. You must bear it awhile; in a short time, perhaps, the mild and placid virtues of forbearance may so win upon your husband, that he may return to you, and you may yet be happy; it is so much better, so far preferable, to proceeding to extremities,

which can heal no breach, nor do any good. Conviction once striking him, he will find in your gentleness, in your mildness, attractions which will have efficient claims upon his return of kindness. But, be assured, nothing (in a case like the present) is so unfortunate or so ill-timed as reproach; it is a closing of the door against your own peace, as well as that of your wedded partner.

“ I speak to you in the greatest confidence. But is not Fitzroy a dangerous friend? God forbid I should injure him in your esteem; but do you not think he contributes *too much to your happiness*? He is young—that may deduce the malice of the world; he is clever and entertaining—and, situated as *you* are, can be no other than a dangerous companion. You may be, and doubtless are, both of you, unconscious of any evil coming from a friendship thus formed and cemented. Without flattery, you are young and beautiful—he the same; he is your confidant—your adviser—the friend to whom you reveal your sor-

rows; this is dangerous. Surely, amid your numerous acquaintances, there is some female, whose discretion and years would be great recommendations to you in your highly-to-be-pitied situation. Cannot you look out for one?"

It was thus Beatrice wrote; but she, for some months, received no reply. She attributed it to letters and packets so frequently miscarrying, and made herself comfortable under that impression, writing a second time to Susan from Berne. She requested her to reply to her immediately, directing her answer to St. Petersburg, to count L——'s, where the Coxe family were going.

Beatrice knew nothing of the Russian language, and was content to make known her sentiments in French. She was not quick in the acquirement of tongues, and it was with sensible mortification she found herself frequently a silent spectatress of the gay parties she was in the habit of seeing at count L——'s house, in St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg she had once wished anxiously to see; but when the time arrived when she was to be an inhabitant of that place, she evinced a restless, anxious, and agitated manner, which her friends found some difficulty in tolerating. Did they walk, she would stay at home; did they go to amuse themselves on the ice-hills with the count's family, she expressed fear, and declined the pleasure; and her manners were such as could not fail to create surprise, as well as dismay, in the bosoms of her friends. She was continually saying — "When do we leave St. Petersburg?" — "Are we to stay long?" — "Do you not begin to wish to return?"

A circumstance still more singular occurred. By the common post a letter came, which, on being delivered to her for whom the address specified it was, caused her to change colour so much, that every one in the room observed it instantly.

"From England?" said Miss Coxe;
"No bad news, I hope?"

Beatrice tried to speak; her agitation

was so palpable and so pitiable, Miss Coxe kindly offered her her arm out of the room—gave some water—opened the window, and preserved her from fainting.

“Some intelligence—very distressing, I fear,” said Miss Coxe, compassionately.

Beatrice shook her head, still grasping the fatal letter in her hand; and then, when sufficiently composed, put the letter into the stove and burned it to ashes; but not a word of its contents transpired. It was but too evident she was wretched, and that something of more than an ordinary nature preyed on her mind, but nothing could induce her to reveal it.

“Was there an English post-mark on the letter?” said one.

“I don’t know,” exclaimed another; “only that it appeared to be a short epistle.”

“Time will discover,” says a third; and so the circumstance dropped.

It was one day, when the count and his visitors were preparing to go on the ice-hills, that Beatrice was persuaded to be of

the party; she rather intended it to be as exercise than a pleasure, for her mind was so overwhelmed by grief and melancholy, as to require some relaxation from the impression of thought. They had hardly been on the ice-hills ten minutes, before the Dolgorucki family joined them, being well acquainted with count L——, who visited them when winter brought them to the capital.

It chanced to be the morning Welitz's first trial took place. Ferdinand Bruhl consequently was not there; but every one was speaking of the singular circumstances attending the murder, and, altogether, the atrocity of the deed.

"And, what is still worse," said a Russian gentleman to Elizabeth Dolgorucki, "it was an Englishman, whom count Bruhl had treated as his own son, who perpetrated the act."

"One of *your* country," said Catherina to Beatrice; who, not understanding the Russian language, could only reply by a

bow and a smile, which at that time could be no otherwise than ill placed.

Miss Coxe however soon informed her friend of the murder, and every circumstance attending it. She was fond of the dreadful and marvellous, and was dilating on every circumstance, with a protracting feeling of wonder and curiosity.

“An Englishman!” said Beatrice, and she turned *very pale*.

“Yes,” said Miss Coxe. “He came two or three years since to St. Petersburg, condemned from his own country, I believe,” said Miss Coxe.

“*Indeed!—You cannot tell me his name?*” she asked.

“No. Welitz is what he is called here—his English one he keeps concealed.”

A convulsive spasm darted through the frame of Beatrice, and a moment after, the composure she had assumed fled. She looked what Miss Coxe said she was—*“dreadfully alarmed.”*

“Get into the sledge,” she said quickly—“no one observes you—you are sudden-

ly taken ill—we will return immediately.”

“ I shall be better soon. Pray don't seem attentive to me; I can go home with the Dolgorucki party; I am faint and sick.”

“ Come, madam,” said a Russian nobleman to Miss Coxe, “ you have gained your wish—the murderer is condemned to die; he richly deserves it.”

Beatrice and Miss Coxe were both silent, one from ignorance, the other from a sentiment she knew not how to describe; but, with some presence of mind, she abruptly changed the conversation, still however continuing to speak in the Russian tongue.

As the sledge admitted of two, Miss Coxe proposed Beatrice should return home immediately. She herself accompanied her to count L——'s house, where she saw her to her own room; and then laying aside all formality, she pointedly asked her whether *she* had any idea who the English murderer was?

Beatrice did not immediately reply.

"Because if you do, it may be necessary you know the issue of his fate," said her friend, gently; and a sudden idea which struck her at the moment, paralyzed her beyond description; she feared—she dreaded, yet wished (particularly if that were the case) to tell her what was the doom pronounced on the criminal.

"*What is the issue of his fate?*" exclaimed Beatrice, without raising her eyes, and catching by the bedpost for support; "do not fear to tell me—I can bear it."

"DEATH!" said Miss Coxe.

"But he is innocent—he told me so—he wrote it to me!" she cried in an agony—"I have it in his own hand; it was dreadful—cruel treachery! Oh, my brother Henry—*my unhappy brother!*" She sunk down into the arms of her friend, who suspected indeed this fatal fact; and the acuteness of her misery was such as deprived her of all power of speech or motion. She had resolution—she had fortitude—she had strength of mind; but be-

fore this calamity every reasonable faculty fled.

In the evening of the next day, Miss Coxe, who had inquired into the circumstances attending the last trial, found another was to be granted. She roused Beatrice to hope it would terminate favourably; she spoke of powerful witnesses, who were to appear in his behalf—she spoke of the lenity of Russian laws; and that perhaps, was his guilt confirmed, it might be punished by banishment, and not by death.

Beatrice had the satisfaction (after a day's suspense) to see a crowd pouring from the hall of justice, and the cries of —“ He is innocent!—he is innocent!” ring along the streets. She just caught a view of Henry's features as he was dragged along in a sledge by the tumultuous multitude; she saw imprinted on them no joy at his escape—no pleasure at his acquittal; throwing open the sash, she could only throw down some flowers, as did all the people in that street, so enthusiastic were they in honouring a man, whom but a few

short hours before they would have dragged with delight to the knout, or to the scaffold. Though Howitzer escaped them both, he perished in his attempts to quit Russia, by the oversetting of the boat in which he *was*, making good the adage—
“ *Justice never sleeps.*”

CHAPTER XII.

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AND here it is incumbent on us to revert to that period, immediately preceding Henry Wycherly's departure from England, and to delineate, at greater length, some of those scenes, which we have been obliged to omit in our tale. We trust the reader will pardon the digression; but as it is necessary to unfold some events which we have hitherto deemed it necessary to conceal, we shall lose no time in directing his attention to the time when Henry, struggling with his conscience,

tried in vain, by false pleasure, to cheat her warning voice.

Mr. Parr, his fellow-student, saw with alarm his entanglements and misery: as far as a friend dare venture to advise, he *did* advise; but he soon found that the irritable temper of Henry could not brook restraint, and his mind was so tenderly alive to his feelings, that he saw him day after day courting ruin, without daring to hazard a word. A few days only before Henry left college, Parr met him at chapel; the altered appearance of his friend touched him to the soul, and he eagerly embraced the first opportunity of speaking to him on his illness; for he chose to imagine the ravages he saw in his countenance were the effects of indisposition.—“I have not been *ill*,” Henry replied, “unless indeed pleasure is an illness;” and the air of proud reserve with which he spoke, made Parr recede two or three steps from his side, before he thought of framing a reply.

“I always valued YOUR friendship,”



exclaimed Henry, after a short pause; "but, for Heaven's sake, do not be talking of my ill looks! if I AM ill, so be it—if well, let it remain; I shall *do*, I dare say. As for my friends, I have many who offer me their—*advice*."

"Remember," said Parr, receding again, "all I have in the world is at your service, under these conditions, that you promise to be as close a student this term as you were last."

"Oh, you lend me money under *conditions*, do you?" said the misguided Henry.

"Yes, I would do so, would you permit me," said Parr again, "and I am certain I could give you a very good reason for it. Do hear me, Wycherly," he continued, observing Henry turn away; "*my* fortune is small, and my purse equally confined; yet, God knows, they are at any man's service who will use them well. You would call me a fool, if I lent my money to a gambler, or one who spent it in dissipation; but to relieve *you*, I would part with all I am worth."

“ And yet you ask me for conditions— for promises,” said Henry.

“ I do ; for you are a man of honour, and will not break your promise—only *make* me one.”

“ No, Parr ; you are a kind friend, but I will not wrong you : your purse could not cover my debts ; and could it, I would not apply it to that purpose. There is my sister Beatrice has fagged at her pen for money for *me*, and where is it now ? She paid my debts, once ; but *I* will pay the next ; you may depend on this, my friend, I well know my own doom—yes, as well as if Fate had opened her book and shewn it to me.” The air of despondence with which he spoke smote on his companion ; Henry perceived it, and immediately changed the conversation to their studies.

Parr however was too much awakened to a sense of Henry’s state of feeling, to omit watching his conduct and actions ; he endeavoured, by every art in his power, to win him back to his former pleasures

and friends in vain ; his mind, misguided and vitiated, sought other fields of enjoyment, and the force of natural talent, united with the brilliancy of intellect, was wasted in making Henry Wycherly a FAMOUS bottle companion, a melancholy proof of " grasping at the shadow, and losing the substance."

When the vacation commenced, Henry told Parr he should return home ; but his friend soon discovered it was a mere fabrication to mislead him ; for, remaining at college to prosecute his studies, he was alarmed, but not surprised, at receiving a letter from Beatrice, to whom he was totally unknown, imploring to hear if he knew aught of her brother : the reply to her inquiries has already been laid before our readers.

Beatrice had *always* corresponded with Henry, and the affection which she had for him, was increased by anxiety for his fate ; when she had heard, through his letters to her, how deeply he was in debt, and how much that idea preyed on his

mind, she employed her talents for his service, and had had the happiness of rescuing him, for that time, from any rash act which he then meditated. She had met him at Balfour Wood, and given the money into his hands; and it was this meeting which occasioned so much animadversion amongst her friends: but it was after hours of severe study, and still severer toil, she found all her hopes likely to prove abortive. After all the joy she had *once* imagined she should impart, nothing but disappointment ensued; and she felt, as many others have before her, heartsick, sad, and miserable.

“ Hope was given to cheer—to smile,  
Not by cheating to beguile.”

Beatrice implicitly kept her word, with respect to not revealing where Henry was: happy was it for her she did so. She constantly enclosed to Henry all the money of which she was mistress—all the rhetoric she could employ, to implore him to allow her to say so; but in vain. She told him to his other frailties not to add

that of inhumanity.—“ Give me leave at least,” she said, “ to tell our father and mother *you are alive and well*; for suspense is equally dreadful to them, as the uncertainty of your future fate appears to be to you.”

Henry was inflexible; and Beatrice, for some time, was in ignorance of his plans herself. She loved him with great tenderness, and to this perhaps may be added, a knowledge of his affection for *her* not a little contributed. What led to his detection was this; it was one morning, at a celebrated banker's, a young man, genteelly dressed, yet with some agitation of manner, presented a bill for payment of a considerable sum, in lord Bridge's name; the sum was very large; and the countenance of the young man who presented it, so keenly alive to the penetrating glances which assailed him, that it could do no otherwise than excite suspicion. He was watched home to his lodgings, and a messenger dispatched to lord Bridge's without delay. The bill proved, as the banker

imagined, a forgery, and the young man was taken into custody within twelve hours after the bill had been presented. He was immediately carried to Bow-street, examined, and committed for trial. Refusing to give his name, his lordship felt some degree of curiosity towards him ; he eagerly took up his glass to examine his countenance, with an idea of recognising perhaps only the ordinary and forbidding front of impudence and guilt ; but no sooner had he fixed his eyes upon him, than, in the wan—pale—wretched face of the man before him, he recognised one whom he had dandled on his knee when a boy, and whose father yet was his intimate friend — Henry Wycherly. He would most readily have abandoned all proceedings against him ; but it was *then* neither legal nor possible ; the trial consequently took place, and Henry was condemned to die.

“ Beatrice,” he said, in his letter, “ I am in Newgate—cast for death ; vain, vain are all my self-reproaches—vain are all my

agonies of remorse—I *must* suffer. To be happy (I now find too late) we must be innocent and virtuous. My dear sister, we must part—for ever then, farewell!"

It was this letter which Mr. Parr had enclosed to her in the one which told of his escape. The distress into which she was plunged, cannot be described; yet it was happiness to what the criminal himself experienced. In the cell, cold and dreary, none of his former companions hastened to see him; they had pleasures to pursue, to which he could no longer contribute—business in which he could no longer share; and it is ever thus the gay leave the heartbroken, silent and solitary, to die.

There is something repugnant to the heart of man, in being made a public spectacle of infamy—a thing for gaping crowds to stare at, and the vehicle of dread to his fellow-beings, alone in a solitary—silent place. Henry Wycherly had full time to brood over his miserable fate, the ignomi-

nious termination of a life, which might have been one of virtue and peace. No one came, with comfortable words, to sooth the cheerless hours of his existence. — Who, of all *his* friends, could think of visiting a cell in Newgate?

The prison clock was something past the hour of eleven, and Henry, composing himself on his pallet, was endeavouring to still the ever-to-be-remembered days which were gone by, when the entrance of a being, whom he had some faint recollection of, caused him to raise his head; it was the student of All Souls, come to visit him in his last extremity.

“ You see,” said the unfortunate young man, “ to what I am reduced; you, I dare say, expected it, for what you foretold to me is all come true.”

The student faltered in his tone as he replied—“ I did indeed; but the time I must spend here is very short. Let us exchange dresses—I have planned the means of your escape;” and so in truth he had—horses were provided down to Do-



ver, and a confidential servant, belonging to the young student, was in readiness to conduct him to the spot appointed.

It took but a few moments for Henry to equip himself in the student's clothes, and also for him to quit that den of thieves—Newgate. With steps almost amounting to distraction (so unequal is the heart to joy) he stood pausing by the door against which the turnkey was. The student's servant, with eagerness, imprudently rushed towards him, saying, in the hearing of the gaoler—" *The horses are ready.*"

In a few moments an outcry was raised—officers were sent in pursuit of the unfortunate, and the student, in the most terrible suspense, learned his well-formed plan was abortive—abortive for the present only. The prisoner escaped; but not till he had been overtaken by one of the officers of pursuit.—And now let the agony of being retaken—the desperation of frenzy—the knowledge of what his fate

was, if again conveyed to Newgate, plead a small shadow of excuse for that act, which, at a calmer hour, he would have died rather than performed. In the struggle (and it was great), Henry drew a small knife from his pocket, and stabbed the officer in the side : he fell back ; Henry heard not the dying groan ; but by speed, almost surpassing the swiftness of man, he reached Great Yarmouth. After experiencing a variety of adventures, in an open boat (so anxious was he to quit England), he embarked for safety, and was charitably taken in by a ship bound for Norway. It was wrecked within sight of land ; and again trusting to his activity for life, he made for shore : the current bore him onwards, and that ardent desire for the preservation of an existence, which was utterly devoid of any charms to cause that strong and ambitious wish—that supernatural strength which actuates man when his death is in view, made Henry at last attain the shore.

It was there he found himself alone and

desolate—the crew were plunged in that deep which had been their graves, and Henry exclaimed—“ I—I, a murderer, am saved !” Ignorant of the coast on which he was, he expected that perhaps his existence had only been preserved, that he might suffer death in a more terrible shape; but when he found himself among the Norwegians, he no longer feared it. He had no knowledge of any plan by which he might gain a subsistence: those who pitied him, he served. By a series of romantic adventures he succeeded in learning to mend nets, and was for some time useful to the fishermen on the Norwegian coast. And here also let us remark, he had leisure and time to reflect on the enormity of his crimes—to feel the agonies of remorse—the sting of despair—the utter abandonment of all hope—and only the prospect of a cheerless and miserable future. Along the bleak sea-shore he would range, and think of HOME, and all its joys—of his parents—his sisters—his brother—beings who lived, but not for him.

The season of his youth had been gay and unprofitable—talents misused—studies neglected—things thrown aside, often crossed his mind, and made him, with the wild solitary feeling of a being of despair, “pant to be in the desert,” where no one could intrude. He watched the storm—but on him it made no impression; the roar of the waves—the beating of the billows, he heard; and it was during those rambles, which he indulged in so frequent, and so often, that he saved Ferdinand Bruhl from a watery grave.

He grew tired of his residence in Norway, and had a latent hope, that the generous man, whose life he saved, might, if they met in *his* country, do him some essential service.

The singular events of this young man's life being thus far delineated, perhaps it will be but needless repetition to enter again on those which occurred afterwards. We shall merely say, he kept up a desultory correspondence with Beatrice, from whom he learned the officer *died* of his

wound! his friend was immediately liberated from Newgate: he learned also, a price was set on his head; and to complete his misery, Anne died, without mentioning him once. Susan was married; but her happiness he should never see: his father was in declining health, approaching to the narrow confines of the tomb. No, Henry could never again revisit England.

When Beatrice and Henry met, we cannot pretend to divine the sentiments which actuated their hearts, nor the sorrowful emotions which poured into their remembrances: we leave it to the reader to imagine how *he* would have felt—"seeing, after three years separation," a brother whom she had loved tenderly, under the present circumstances.

Once the meeting over, Henry entreated permission to leave St. Petersburg, for count Bruhl's country lodge. The extreme earnestness of his request at first astonished Ferdinand, who was soon let into the light of his sister being in the capital; but when he heard Beatrice had

left the evening previous, he was no longer surprised.

The countenance of his friend revealed but in a small measure what he felt; and Ferdinand, with urgent feelings, implored him to stay at least till his spirits were recovered.

At these words Henry could no longer control his emotion.—“ All places and their change, are alike to me,” he said; “ but I have reasons which impel me to solitude; and did you know them, you would not for a moment hesitate—I am ill.”

“ I do not hesitate, if you wish it,” said Ferdinand; “ but Wolki is so cold, so desolate.”

“ It cannot be too cold, nor too desolate for me,” replied Henry. “ Count Bruhl—Ferdinand, my friend, God bless you!”

They were the last words Ferdinand ever heard him utter; for Henry took leave of him then, never to see him more. He did indeed receive two letters from Wolki, written in the hand of despair: the third reached him just as he had pre-

vailed on Catherina to fix the wedding-day: it was this:—

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“ DEAR FRIEND,

“ I have caused this to be written for me, by the hand of your faithful servant: I am too ill to write myself; but I wished, before I go, to thank you for the past—to tell you I could never return to that country which you have urged me so much to do. You offered me the *means* too. Ah, my dear friend, this cannot be! crime has shut a gate against me—a crime!—is it not written on my despairing forehead?—is it not engraved in restless, yet everlasting, characters in my heart? It must be. I have lived to see every human project fail, and all through my own sin. Yet I repent—I murmur not. Ferdinand, we must part; and I must go, trembling, to a doom too terrible to express. Yet the Redeemer is merciful.

“ Farewell!”

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To this was affixed a small note of the servant's own composition, simply to say, the English gentleman *was* dead.

### CHAPTER XIII.

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UNFORESEEN incidents prevented the Coxe family from returning to England for a twelvemonth after the affair at St. Petersburg. During that time, Beatrice had kept up a constant correspondence with Susan, if correspondence it might be termed, which existed but on one side. An alarming silence created in her the utmost anxiety respecting the probable issue of the unhappy difference between the married pair; and it was with sentiments of delightful pleasure she found herself once more on British ground, proceeding to that house which she could not revisit without emotion; the trees forwarder in growth—the plantations in a

thrifty and blooming state, left her in no doubt respecting to whose care they had been left—the spot, so beautiful, wanting nothing but HAPPINESS!

Mr. Coxe, who well divined the anxiety of her feelings, lost no time in driving her to William's house; and agitated by a variety of feelings, she sprang into the chaise and set off. Once arrived at the park gate, Mr. Coxe was going to alight to open it; but a man at work on a neighbouring bank, observing him, immediately came forwards to offer his services.

They had passed through the gate, when Beatrice, who could no longer resist a question respecting her sister (so impressed was she with a prophetic feeling of ill), said—"You know Mrs. Holt—is she well?"

"May be she is, ma'am," replied the man, with some surprise; but she is——" and the last words were lost in the rattling of the chaise wheels.

To Beatrice every spot was familiar; the very flowers themselves seemed to be the

same she had left growing many months before—the walks—the summer-house, where Fitzroy had read to them, was still in existence, looking as clean and well kept as ever.—“ This looks well,” she thought; “ sure nothing unhappy has occurred.” But the impression of melancholy on her mind seemed to deaden this hope; and when the chaise drew up, she felt unable to step from it, and equally unable to speak.

Mr. Coxe was going to alight, and a man in livery, not the Holts’ livery, came forward to hold the horse.—“ Is your master at home?” said Mr. Coxe.

“ Is your MISTRESS at home?” exclaimed Beatrice, with a quick accent—“ is Mrs. Holt here?”

“ Ah,” advanced Mr. Coxe again, observing the man was evidently not in the Holts’ livery, “ is Mr. Holt at home?”

“ Mr. Holt has left this house this half-year, sir; *he* lives at Hethering Hall,” said the man; “ and is *sir William* now.”

Beatrice was very pale, very faint; and

Mr. Coxe, after begging for a glass of water for her, attempted to drive off.

"I wish," said Beatrice, in great agitation, "you would just ask the man if Susan is still—I mean, is well, and at Hethering with her husband: I wish you——" She stopped, recollecting, if her fears were not realized, how much she was discovering. But Mr. Coxe, who was just then employed in gathering up his reins, only replied, not observing her agitation—"Undoubtedly your sister is with sir William. How sorry I am you should hear of your uncle's death in so sudden a manner! this proves to me your English letters miscarried."

"Yes," said Beatrice, reviving, "they did: yet I much wonder Susan did not write to congratulate me on my arrival. My father and mother I did not expect would; but that will not prevent me from seeing them as early as possible, for I feel a great wish once more to be at home."

Arrived at lord Coxe's, Beatrice found a large party were coming to dinner, chiefly to pay their compliments to the family. On hearing their names, one peculiarly struck her attention; it was that of *Archer*. —“What, the curate of Hethering?” said she, in a pleased tone of voice.

“Yes, the curate of Hethering,” said Miss Coxe, laughing; “and when you have read that letter, which I judge is from home, you will perhaps adorn yourself to receive him.”

But Beatrice requested permission to be alone that day, professing herself so shocked at the account of her uncle's death, as to be unfit for society; and under this plea she was excused. Her letter from home was this:

“DEAR BEATRICE,

“We are very glad you have thought it proper, after so long an absence, to return again to England. We trust

and hope, my dear child, your sentiments are changed, and that you are willing to subscribe to the same opinions as ourselves; but should this not be the case, we all earnestly hope you will come to us soon. Your father enjoys much such health as usual, but is thinner and paler than when you left him. Mary has two children, and is so completely occupied by them, as not to be able to come and see us this spring: her last letter too was very short. Sawbridge is as you left him. Your poor uncle Holt is no more, and William is now a baronet. I forbear to enter into other particulars until we meet. My dear child, I read that part of your letter which speaks of our unfortunate son, Henry, with great sorrow. How happy I shall be to see *you*, my dear, once again!

“ Mr. Faulkner has made the Lodge a sweet place, and the other day was wondering when *you* would return. We have read him all your letters, which related to foreign countries, which he appeared to take a pleasure in hearing: he is a most

pleasant man. God bless you, my dear Beatrice!

“ Believe me,

“ Your affectionate mother,

“ M. WYCHERLY.

“ *Brundale, May 19, 18—.*

“ P. S. Mr. Faulkner, I forgot to say,
is not yet married.”

When Beatrice read this letter, it at first produced in her the keenest feelings of pleasure; but they were counteracted by the penetration which she possessed and exerted, respecting some parts of it. No mention was made of Susan, and the style of the epistle altogether seemed to bespeak a querulous sense of misery in the writer. Susan, who had been her favourite daughter—the daughter on whom her happiness had so deeply rested, was not mentioned. She justly feared the “other particulars” her mother did not wish to name till they met, were of no pleasant nature. It seemed too that she was aban-

done by her chief hopes; and was glad to welcome the daughter home again, to whose fate she had once expressed herself indifferent. In this idea Beatrice was more anxious than she would otherwise have been to return; it would give *her* the greatest possible pleasure to be of comfort to her parents, and more peculiarly so if they needed it. She therefore lost no time in going to Brundale; and so anxious was she in that respect, that she even preferred the accommodation a stage coach afforded, to waiting for lord Coxe's carriage. To a mind like hers, the inconveniences were trifling; travelling in post-chaises was at once lonely and unprotected; and with firmness and composure she stepped into the vehicle for her HOME!

There were so many painful as well as pleasing thoughts in that idea, that it was not until she had been half an hour in the coach, that she perceived herself the companion of two genteel men; one rather in an advanced period of life—the other young, apparently his son. She found

herself treated with respect; for Mr. Coxe saw her to the stage himself, and was too well known not to be immediately recognised as the representative of his father; and even if he had not, two servants in livery closed the door upon her; and at least they bespoke she was no ordinary passenger.

They passed the house formerly occupied by William and Susan. Beatrice, whilst looking at that sweet spot, heard the younger gentleman inquire to whom it belonged. His father, for such she took him to be, replied—"It *did* belong to sir William Holt."

"And to whom does it belong now?" said the younger man.

"I do not know."

"Was not Mrs. Holt a very pretty woman?" said the son, with an air of reviving recollection in his face.

"I do not know: there has been a great deal said of her."

Glances passed between the two gentlemen, which in part seemed to reveal what

this "great deal" was.—"There was a vast deal of unhappiness before——" and glances again were the interpreters of thought—"before the unfortunate crisis."

"Before *what*?" Beatrice wished to say; but a sense of timidity and self-respect kept her silent—"before what 'unfortunate crisis?'"

"*She* was very pretty—exposed to temptation, and neglected—he gay: it was a pity; for if that had not been the case, there was every thing to make them happy," said the elder gentleman again.

Beatrice turned pale and faint; and had not tears come to her relief, in all probability she *would* have fainted; but she wished by no means to discover by any emotion that she was related to the parties of whom they were speaking; only venturing, after the lapse of a few moments, to say—"Pray, sir, do you know where lady Holt (I do not mean the dowager)—the present lady Holt is?"

There was a pause, and both gentlemen looked at each other before they ventured

to reply.—“In London,” said the father.

“Did you not ever hear she was very handsome?” asked the son, who turned his eyes on Beatrice as he spoke, with an air of interest. “Perhaps *you* have seen her, ma’am?” he added.

“Yes,” and Beatrice bowed, “often.”

“She was one of the Wycherlys, I think? What a singular family that was! *She* had by far the most beauty of any one in the family, I hear. Anne I knew—a fine figure; and I remember hearing a strange story of that **VERY PLAIN** one, *Beatrice*, turning Catholic, and going abroad. She was a strange character: there was something odd in her too. I recollect seeing her once; I thought her most amazingly plain; but it was by the side of a lovely girl—a Miss Amherste.”

A severe stamp on his foot, accompanied by a pinch of the arm, made the son cease his harangue, and look to the quarter from whence they proceeded. He even then could not elucidate, and was actually going to continue his speech, by the words

—“ That Beatrice once——” Another VERY severe stamp on his foot, accompanied by a frown, and a peculiar direction of the eye, made him at length comprehend an indistinct something, which was fortunate enough to make him hold his tongue.

The father had seen on a small box, the address—“ Miss Wycherly ;” and it took him not a moment to discover she was the identical “ plain one,” of odd memory ; not that *he* thought her so plain—but that peculiarity which dwells on the countenance when we hear ourselves talked of, actuated hers, and in such a manner as could not fail to inform him who she was.

Beatrice, once arrived at home, found that her parents were indeed much changed ; her father’s ill health had altered him so much, she would scarcely have recognised him, had she met him by chance ; his hair was thinner and whiter, his steps more feeble, his voice broken—and, combined to this, there was a thoughtful and

troubled cast of care in his countenance, which seemed reflected on her mother's. They met, however, with tender affection, and Beatrice felt it was indeed delightful to have a *home*.

In conversing of the family, Beatrice heard no mention of Susan. Mary and *her* lovely children had been spoken of with some pleasure; and Mrs. Wycherly had hinted, Sawbridge had "thought" of a neighbouring young lady, with a good fortune, to whom he "intended making his bow;" and the estate (Brundale) was getting less and less encumbered.

"And how is dear Susan?" said Beatrice, scarcely venturing to touch on that chord.

"Susan is *very well*," replied Mrs. Wycherly coolly—"she is in town with a sister of Mr. Fitzroy; they lived so miserably, it is best for them to live apart. Susan has been sadly to blame—and William, *sir* William is a strange man!"

Beatrice felt relieved, and resolved to write immediately, as she could obtain her

address; expressing this wish to her mother, she assented to it apparently unmoved; asked Beatrice to tell her what she had seen, where she had been, and how she liked foreign countries—was glad to see her improved in figure and person, for her hair was grown a “sweet colour,” and she was not like the same being; and concluded by wondering if Mr. Faulkner would not think as she did.

CHAPTER XIV.

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Come look upon me——

Do I bear semblance of a happy man?

Is my cheek proud—my step light—my mien gay?

*Old Play.*

BEATRICE had not been at home more than a month, before her parents fully appreciated the comfort of her society. She *could* entertain, they found; she had gained not only a knowledge of the world, but other trivial accomplishments which are

necessary to a female—or if not absolutely necessary, at least pleasant and delightful. Her father had but *one* wish in her ungratified—her mother had but two: the faith she professed, and which she still held, and the indifference with which she treated Mr. Faulkner.

“It strikes me,” said Mr. Wycherly, one evening when Beatrice had left the room, and Mrs. Wycherly was alone with him, “that our Beatrice is left as a comfort to us; how lonely you know we felt, love, till *she* came—and how lonely we should appear if she left us now! Susan, on whom we rested so much, and who married so well, is *very* much changed, and latterly seemed to forget *us*; but Beatrice, our good daughter, who I do not think so very plain, gives up all her time to us; and I must think, my dear, she is clever. How well she reads and plays, and how kind she seems to all my wants! plays chess with me, till I am sure she must be half tired to death; and after all, perhaps, *we* treated *her* with a little too much se-

verity when she left us to go abroad—but now she is come back, we——”

“ Did you observe,” said Mrs. Wycherly, in a lively voice, “ how Mr. Faulkner looked at her?—with so *much* interest, I thought, and I dare say imagined as we did, she was changed for the better. How he talked to her too! oh, how I wish she was not a Catholic !”

“ It's all our fault she ever was so,” answered Mr. Wycherly—“ Catholic or Protestant, she is a very good girl.”

“ And Mr. Faulkner, I am convinced,” continued his lady, who was like a ship going before the wind, “ still thinks of her; they are so suited to each other—that charming Lodge too——”

“ And then we blamed her about the dowager's will, when perhaps she was no more to blame than you or I; for if we consider, it was rather a delicate thing for her to press the making of a thing which was to benefit her,” said Mr. Wycherly gravely.

“And her conduct has been uniformly so kind ; if Susan had had half her judgment—but then it’s no use repining again,” advanced Mrs. Wycherly—“but as she is now coming we will talk no more of her, for the best of us do not know how to bear praise.”

It was not Beatrice, but Mr. Faulkner, who called with a letter which had been put in his post bag by mistake ; it was addressed to Mrs. Wycherly, who, with some trepidation, lost no time in breaking the seal and reading the epistle.

“Lady Holt (the dowager) wants us to go over and see her, before she goes to town,” said Mrs. Wycherly when she had read it—“speaks very flattering of Beatrice, at least the account she *hears* of her.—By the bye, what do *you* think of her foreign expedition?” said she, appealing to Mr. Faulkner—“do you think it has altered her?”

“I could not wish her altered in any respect,” said he hesitating, “except one.”



"Ah, true indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Wycherly, sighing.

Mr. Wycherly mused, but said nothing.

"I think Miss Wycherly, with respect to person, very much improved," said Mr. Faulkner.

Her entrance caused him to cease speaking, and lady Holt's letter was read again. Mrs. Wycherly could not, just at that time, accept the invitation herself, nor Mr. Wycherly; but they peculiarly wished Beatrice to accept it, which she did, perhaps having the same thoughts existing in her heart her father and mother had in theirs. Mr. Faulkner offered his curricie (as Mr. Wycherly had laid down his carriage), which Beatrice politely, yet steadily refused, preferring Sawbridge's gig.

Mr. Faulkner was not blind to the mode of conduct she had adopted towards him, and it was then he felt the full force of her generosity of spirit; it was not difficult to perceive HE was yet the man of her choice—the being whom she regarded;

but so fearful was she of raising a hope merely to destroy it, that she kept to a tenour of manners which could not give any chimerical ideas to a lover. She could be cheerful, without coquetry—lively, without flirtation—candid and unreserved, without giving Mr. Faulkner leave to suppose *he* possessed her confidence beyond any other.

“Were *she* not a *Catholic*,” said he, “we might be happy.”

“Were *he* not a *PROTESTANT*,” said she, “we might be happy.”

But each felt reluctant to think of what might not be, under the impression it never *would* be; avoiding that sort of delusion which, so often encouraged, carries with it almost certain and severe disappointment.

“She will not change,” he said, when he found that the sight of her had awakened passions which had only slept—and “*He* will not change,” she exclaimed, when she found that her heart was in the same state.

They tried to meet as friends; but each soon began to discover that it was an unsafe and dangerous experiment to try; they parted with regret—they met with pleasure; and Beatrice, determined to circumvent the pains she had once endured, was not sorry when the day came which brought Sawbridge's gig to the door, to convey her to Hethering. She found the dowager less happy, less gay, less vain, than when she left England—full of querulous complaints against the world and her circle of friends (visiting acquaintances), for neglect and omission of their calls and attentions; and she was very glad when Beatrice came to entertain her. From the dowager she learned the state of unhappiness had increased to such an extent between her son and Susan, that *she* advised her to go to London for a time, with Mr. Fitzroy's sister, Mrs. Hayden, to prevent their proceeding to extremities; nothing so much DISCOMPOSING a family, as the separation of a married pair.

“ And it was so evident to all who

knew them," said the dowager, "that I strongly advised it myself; and I acted in this case, I trust, reasonably and discreetly."

Beatrice could have nothing to say to this, only venturing to touch on the main spring of the sorrow between them—William's unfaithfulness.

"You both surprise and astonish me by your remark," said the dowager, and she *did* look both—"William has never given Susan cause, in one single instance, one solitary instance, for *her* conduct; but, like most men, when he found himself deceived, and that she loved another, he was cool; she grew angry, he indifferent—from one thing they proceeded to another."

"'Tis then as I feared," said Beatrice to herself.

"And I foresee nothing but misery; of all the sorrows I have ever known, this is the most painful," added the dowager.

"But surely it admits of redress," exclaimed Beatrice, whose arduous mind

was busied in the wish of uniting again this unhappy pair—"and I must say, in Susan's defence (though it morally is none), that your son first was unfaithful to *her*; *he* first was cool—*he* first ceased to love."

"He first ceased to love!—NO," exclaimed the dowager—"there you are bitterly mistaken."

"I was there at the time," advanced Beatrice gently.

"So you might—but you could not read their hearts."

"At least," said Beatrice again, "she is wrong in going where the man is whom she is accused of loving. But I can hardly believe my sister Susan, who always had the highest possible veneration for virtue, could love another person besides her husband—until, indeed, she was driven to it from unkindness. I do not mean to excuse her by saying this; only I hope you will admit there has been faults on both sides."

"By no means—*that* is a thing I never can admit," said the dowager—"your sis-

ter has not gone to London to seek this man—she is rather gone to avoid him—for he is possibly ignorant of her attachment; he is still in the country, and I dare say you have seen him.”

“No, I have not,” said Beatrice.

“You have not!—that is strange too, living so near; but Mr. Faulkner is——”

“Mr. Faulkner, madam!” said Beatrice, slightly colouring.

“Yes, it is he whom I meant; is he not now at Brundale?”

“Yes; but there must be some mistake—some error; Susan never loved Mr. Faulkner. How glad I am——” and tears spoke the rest—“it was Mr. Fitzroy I feared.”

“Mr. Fitzroy is William’s friend, and *her* friend; he has endeavoured to make peace where no peace could be made. I wish to see my son happy.”

“Do you think he would speak to me on the subject,” said Beatrice, “and not think me intrusive?—these things are of a delicate and intricate nature, and ill can

bear the investigation and canvassing of people; but there seems to me some fatal misunderstanding?"

All the dowager's reply was—"Do any thing you can to unite them.—William cannot be more miserable than he is."

That evening Beatrice received a letter from Susan, written in a style quite different to that she usually employed; it was wretchedly gay—touched on scenes of fashionable life, scenes of domestic life—drawing a melancholy parallel between them. She had also, with some acuteness of discernment, decided in favour of the latter.

Sir William, whom Beatrice had not seen since her arrival in England, came in at the moment she had the epistle in her hand, her eyes wet with tears, and quite unnerved for the sight of *him*.

A sort of overstrained politeness, an affectation of happiness, attended every action. He was not gloomy and reserved, as when she had seen him last, but seemed

rather to be in a kind of state which was a bitterness of feeling he fought against and endured. Beatrice found the dowager stepped off as soon as she could, to give them an opportunity of that conversation which it was easy to perceive each had been advised of, and expected.

Beatrice, who had the fairest opening for it, without looking at her cousin, said—  
“This letter is from Susan; she talks of returning home: when will it be agreeable for you to receive her?”

William, at once surprised by this address, at first did not immediately reply, for though he was aware of the reason why the dowager left the room, he had not looked for this appeal; without directly replying to it, he said—“My mother has told me of your wish to converse with me on Susan; but it is a subject yet so painful to me——” he for a moment hesitated—“that it creates in me so much distress, and——”

Beatrice, with something of a joyful surprise, asked him whether he would an-



swer her one question, at the same time interrupting him. He replied, he would.

“ You must first pardon me for asking it; but as so much depends on it (*my* happiness being united with that of my sister’s), I trust—I hope that will soften what to you may seem impertinent and forward in me to require. You perhaps still regard her—perhaps I *may* add, still love her.”

Beatrice need not have advanced this, for William bore in his countenance the emotions passing in his heart; in vain he summoned his pride to his aid—his natural feeling could not be suppressed—and, after a moment’s hesitation, he said—“ Ask the question, Beatrice, and I will answer it.”

She was going so to do, when the door was opened, and a stranger was introduced, in whose countenance, in whose figure, it took not long to discover sufficient demonstration it was *Fitzroy*! Beatrice left the room, only bowing as she passed; whilst William extended his hand to greet

that of his friend; but what was his surprise, to find that of his friend was withdrawn!

“My dear fellow, Fitzroy!” said he generously—“what does all this mean?”

“My dear fellow, Fitzroy!” repeated the other, with a sudden inflexion of voice, —“these are names befitting your friend; I am no longer so.”

William, at once astonished, demanded an explanation, which Fitzroy no longer hesitated to give, and as he laid aside his hat and coat, his friend saw the ravages of illness in his countenance, and the stamp of despair in his words.

“Promise,” he exclaimed, turning his eyes full on William, “that you will at least hear me with patience—condemn me as you please, and revile me as you may. I came to speak my heart to you. You have a wife, young and beautiful—you are living miserable and lonely. I can point out to you the wretch who has blasted your field of promise, who with sure and fatal hand has parted you from her: who has done more than this—had the

completion of his wishes, and the downfall of yours in view ; and your honour too—has perhaps sullied *that*, beyond the power of reparation or——”

“ And who is this villain ? ” exclaimed William, in sudden and vehement frenzy, starting off his chair, and proceeding directly opposite to his friend.

“ Hear me with patience,” said Fitzroy, calmly, yet still standing ; “ hear me ; and you may repay him all.”

“ Repay him all !—hear you CALMLY ! ” said the agonized husband, in the power of his rage : “ let him restore me my honour ; let him give me back my wife—my peace of mind—my happiness. Is it—is it——”

“ Do not guess,” exclaimed the friend, in a low yet distinct voice ; “ this wretch, who seduced your wife away, is repaid ; the honour he blasted, has been punished with the entire demolition of his own ; the happiness he broke—the peace of mind he shattered, is come home to him in DEEP and TERRIBLE vengeance to his own bo-

som. Your wife—you—all may revile—for you have been deceived."

"And where is this being—this man?" said William, with a voice which was touched by the romantic one of his friend, "who, if he falls in my path, may justly dread my anger and broken peace? Where is he? that, if I meet him, I may punish him with my vengeance?"—and his tone was loud and angry—"Where is he, I say?"

"Where is he!" said Fitzroy, raising his voice, "HERE!"

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"Does not Mr. Fitzroy stay supper?" said the dowager, after William entered the drawing-room; "did he come from town this evening? Beatrice tells me he looks very ill. How did he leave Susan?"

"Mr. Fitzroy is *gone*!" said William; and so much did the manner in which he spoke those words tend to damp her ladyship's curiosity, that she dared not hazard another word.

CHAPTER XV.  
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It was two days after this, that sir William, without any previous conference with the dowager and Beatrice, sent off for Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly in his own carriage, ordering dinner to be ready at five o'clock, an hour later than usual; wrote a short and formal note to Mr. Wycherly, requesting his company to dine, wanting to see both him and his lady on particular business.

As Mr. Wycherly's foot was better, and the fates decreed that Mrs. Wycherly should have a crape cap, which she had no objection to shew, though surprised at the lateness of the invitation, and the sending the chariot, she determined to go. Consequently, at eleven o'clock, she and her husband stepped into the carriage, and, without delay, set off for Hethering.

They met Mr. Faulkner on the confines

of the village, who was rather surprised at the suddenness of their going, and, like themselves, was somewhat astonished also at the lateness of the invitation. He however rode off, wishing them a pleasant journey.

When arrived at Hethering, there was no air of pleasant bustle, no joyful looks: the dowager was courteous, but at the same time sententious and melancholy; Beatrice was distressed and grave; William was grave also, yet appeared to be struggling against some evil, and endeavouring to be cheerful.

They met as the best of friends; but there seemed an awkward restraint on all, which it was impossible to lay aside or do away; and no reason was given by the host for the haste in which he had sent for Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly; he appeared as if fearful, and dreading an investigation, and at once (by his abstraction and absence, during the time which elapsed before dinner) gave evident proofs that something was on his mind which absorbed every other idea;

nor was this to be wondered at, when the cause of these feelings were known.

There was some difficulty made about taking the head of the table, between lady Holt and Beatrice—neither seemed inclined; and William, who till then had preserved every feature unmoved, became suddenly agitated, and begged his mother not to be any longer ceremonious, adding, at the same time, with a **VERY** melancholy air—"I hope soon to have some one to fill that place."

"Oh ho!" thought Mr. Wycherly, "he wishes for a divorce;" but of course nothing was said, and dinner passed off tolerably well—for females peculiarly shine in that ingenious turn of conversation which is alike amusing to the mind without engaging its force—conversation to which it is *no trouble* to listen.

When the ladies left the gentlemen, Mrs. Wycherly naturally guessed the subject of their conversation would be, the recent and ever-to-be regretted unhappiness between sir William and his wife; nor

was she mistaken. The dowager, with a view of amusing Mrs. Wycherly, led her into the hot-house, the green-house, the garden, the shrubberies; and Beatrice, as she followed with a pang of sincere regret, could not help thinking how sad a thing it was there should be all the *et cætera* of happiness without its real existence.

There was one little place which peculiarly struck her, when she entered, as being the haunt of Susan, before she was so entirely an alien to her husband's love; it was a grotto, furnished as a study. There were books, writing materials, some music, an organ, and a piano. The walls Susan had herself ornamented with shell-work and paintings; some of those were evidently by a masterly hand, and, on looking at the backs of them, there was the name "*Fitzroy*" on them, which created in Beatrice no surprise whatever. This grotto (or rather, we might have said, saloon) was frequently used as a room for the receival of company, but had never been used for that purpose since Susan had been in town.

Mrs. Wycherly saw what Beatrice was suffering, and, as quickly as she could, left the grotto, which joined the drawing-room, saying to the dowager—"I am now more than ever convinced money does not constitute happiness."

"I don't really see the allusion," said the dowager, drawing up.

"Why, I mean to say, there is every thing charming here, and this young pair are not happy," said Mrs. Wycherly.

"They wanted nothing but——" virtue, the dowager was going to add, but a sentiment of pity made her hesitate, and at last finally determine not to say it; it was well she did not, for it spared her, at some future hour, the remembrance of having wounded her sister-in-law's feelings; and with a condescending air she said—

"Come, Beatrice, let us have some music, and then we will have tea; the gentlemen will have no objection to join us I am sure."

With these words she closed the drawing-room door, and sat down by the fire, pushing a footstool to Mrs. Wycherly, which

the distressed mother saw was her daughter's working.

Mrs. Wycherly could not perceive Susan's picture any where, and on appealing to lady Holt, she found it was removed out of the drawing-room into an apartment seldom used; this was another bad symptom. She saw also, when any allusion was made to her, her ladyship smiled superciliously, and ventured no kind of reply. Beatrice, too, instead of vindicating Susan, was silent and reserved.

With a little music and conversation they weathered out the time till they were joined by sir William and Mr. Wycherly; then came tea, and silence; for no one was inclined to converse, until the room was cleared of the equipage, and the servants gone; then drawing their chairs round the fire, they made a small circle—we wish we could have added happy—but there was one wanted to complete it, who, alas! was not there, to spread joy or gladness by her presence.

“We are all friends and relations here,”

said sir William, with some embarrassment of manner, which was not altogether to be wondered at; "I shall therefore now tell you, candidly, why I summoned my father-in-law, through bad roads and so much perplexity, to attend me.

"I love my wife dearly——"

The dowager shrugged up her shoulders and looked to the grotto door, which was ajar, interrupting her son at a most important moment. He stopped—and Beatrice closed the door.

"I always loved her; and never, even in thought, from my boyhood, thought of any one else. As to being unfaithful to her, I would sooner have perished!"

Lady Holt shrugged up her shoulders; for the door was open again, and sir William again interrupted. Beatrice closed it once more.

"That door," said Mrs. Wycherly, "is very troublesome; see that it catches, Beatrice, *this time*."

Beatrice obeyed, and once more sir William went on—"My wife has been deceiv-

ed—so have I—so have we all ; Fitzroy is a wretch ; but, God knows, the love I bear Susan is——”

“ That door *again* !” exclaimed the dowager, with some asperity ; and Beatrice again rose to close it, and she would have done so, had not it been pushed open wider, and the being of whom sir William was speaking rushed through it, and fell into his arms !

It was a moment of surprise, delightful surprise, to all. The dowager, with much real pleasure, condescended to salute and embrace Susan ; and we need not add how Beatrice’s generous spirit exulted in a prospect of the reconciliation of two persons who were formed for each other.

Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly, astonished and amazed, could only conjecture how this happy change had been effected, for no elucidation had taken place, and the dowager knew her son too well not to imagine he would sacrifice any thing for his honour’s sake, and readily guessed that some discovery had been made by Fitzroy, at-

tended with circumstances of a happy nature, which led to the reunion of him and his wife.

Susan, a little calmed, was prevailed on to take some refreshment; but her heart was too full, her mind too much agitated, to permit much time to be passed in the unromantic science of eating; she therefore drew her chair into the little circle, and, with her hand in her husband's, entreated him to explain to the wondering party those incidents which had again led her to a happy home.

There indeed was a group of happy faces; and when sir William could compose himself sufficiently to be rational, he related, in as few words as he could, the following tale:—

“ You are none of you ignorant when Fitzroy came to stay at my house; he seemed a man of good heart and penetrative understanding, and so I thought he was; I was aware he was studious and grave, slow to form opinions, and still slower to express them, One morning I met

him by chance in the garden, he was unusually grave, and when I inquired the reason, he gave me one which was vague and unsatisfactory. I jested him on being in love; he directly replied, with great vehemence, and a voice calculated to excite curiosity—‘Thank God, I am not like you—MARRIED!’

“He would have left me, but his countenance underwent so many changes, I would not release his arm.

‘All women are deceitful,’ he exclaimed.

‘No, no,’ I replied, ‘not all; my wife is an exception—is she not?’

“He refused to assent to this, and I left him; at dinner he was as usual.

“A few days afterwards he asked me whether I would ride to his house, which was building; I had no objection, and we went. On our return home, he again introduced the subject of women being deceitful, and added—‘I hate to see my own sex imposed on; and I aver the ruling passion of the other sex is ambition; I have an instance of it before my eyes—I mean,

very near me: I beg pardon, I don't know what I say.'

"It was impossible for me to know his confusion was pretended, it was so natural. I felt alarmed, and said—'Explain yourself; what do you mean?—who is it you allude to?'

'Promise me,' he said, 'you will never reveal. I have it in my power to tell you, from undeniable authority—but the person to whom it relates must never know.'

"I promised. He told me it was my wife. I then vehemently demanded him to prove it—to enter into what he hinted—for my suspense was beyond endurance.

'Did you never perceive,' said he, 'you were not the man of her choice, and that she married *you* from motives of ambition?'

'I never suspected it,' I answered; 'but who is the man she does regard?'

'A man who is perfectly ignorant of her passion for him—Mr. Faulkner!'

"I was surprised, and incredulous. I tried to fancy I saw reluctance in her man-

ner when I led her to the altar; I tried to think the grave, cool Fitzroy spoke truth; I tried to think she had been deficient in point of affection, and as he had told me it could not in nature be supposed that she should long veil her real sentiments from me, I was taught to expect that coolness which subsequently followed."

"But," exclaimed Susan, with great eagerness, attempting to speak; "I am sure——"

"Let me tell my tale first," said sir William, smiling, "and then you shall tell yours."

"I had promised not to reveal what Fitzroy had told me; yet, I confess, when I saw Susan so cold, so half indignant, so contemptuous as I *then* thought, I imagined I *must* upbraid her; but my pride and my heart revolted against it, and I was obliged to subdue myself to gloomy civility. I could not treat her with confidence, for I conjectured she had no love for me, and that it was ambition alone which prompted the marriage at all."

“Fitzroy one day asked me if he was not right?—‘God forbid,’ said he, ‘I should make dissension between man and wife, but you forced me to tell you, you know. I do not the least wonder you feel as you do, I should much wonder if you did not; but you must endeavour to seek pleasures apart from your wife.’

“I did not then know this man, or I should have seen through his words. Some time passed thus, when I found Susan no longer seemed unhappy—*she* had probably found other pleasures—and asked my advice on going to London. I was indifferent: she pressed her suit, as it was to Mrs. Hayden, Fitzroy’s sister. I gave her money, and we separated.

“Three days since, in the evening, Fitzroy presented himself before me; he was, and is, evidently in a deep decline.—And now, my dear wife, you must prepare to hear what may give *you* some uneasiness; but remember we are before friends, who can judge from what motives and feelings *you* acted, and

are willing to put the best possible construction on your error. It *was* a peril to you, that you should make a confidant of a young and handsome man ;” (Susan coloured deeply, and was silent) “ yet I am so convinced of the virtue and purity of your mind, and the delusion which you laboured under, that though I credit Fitzroy’s statement, I believe you to be the same innocent Susan I married.—He told me it required his greatest arts to subdue you to think ill of me ; that he paved the way, by hints and insinuations, to fully acquaint you with my infidelity and unfaithfulness—that he almost feared, in the anguish of your mind, you would upbraid me, but that he reasoned with you and told you, you would sacrifice all chance of a reunion, if you did employ such means to regain me—that it were far better to assume a coldness, independent of contempt, towards me. He then entered into every circumstance minutely : he told me he once made Beatrice a winder for her silk of a part of a letter, which *he wrote purposely*

to be seen! and that your very innocence, and unsuspecting character, gave him the better chance of succeeding. He first proposed your going to town; he persuaded you that he entreated me to go, (this was entirely false,) and he saw his schemes gradually ripen—gradually approach to the consummation. But when the time really came, when he paused to reflect, he, for the first time in his life, felt repugnance to carry his plans into execution; the prey he thought was easy to be won, he told me, for he observed in you a greater love for fashion, and less regard to me. He endeavoured to stimulate you to *revenge*, which, for a short time, you seemed to adopt, and then abolished as unworthy of you. But *you* loved virtue: *he* loved *you*. He says he often felt inclined to throw himself at your feet and declare his passion, but DARED not. For I speak it here, and hope it is a truth universally acknowledged and known, that there is an awe in virtue and conscious innocence, which will make the deceitful tremble.—When he re-

flected on what he had done, and on the indisposition which he was told threatened his life, he began to hesitate—to be seized with a lingering desire to repair what he had caused. Your unhappy state—your failing health, all conspired to hasten that confession which has brought us together, and it was for the purpose of restoring peace to both of us, which brought him from London three days ago; and yesterday he took his leave of England, I should think, from his disease, never to return.”

The dowager lowered her gravity; and Susan, with true and genuine affection, looking on the circle, said—“ *My* tale is short; nevertheless I must enter into it before we part, that all parties may be satisfied. All the former part of mine is but a prototype of my husband’s; I shall therefore only say, that Fitzroy appeared so strongly my friend, that though warned by that lady there,” (pointing to Beatrice,) “ I made him my confidant—a plan I hope no woman will ever peril herself in doing;

he advised me to seek no converse with my husband on his supposed infidelity, but to endeavour to forget his misconduct; yet at the same time hinting, 'there was once a lady at Pantley, whom William preferred to me before our marriage.—I must endeavour to have other fields of amusement independent of him.'

"He then recapitulated things which never existed, and called on me to revenge myself.—'How shall I revenge myself?' I asked. He was silent. He then informed me, Mr. John Flegge, with whom he was intimate, once told him my husband loved a pretty Quakeress; but that *he* did not give credence to, well knowing, from good authority, 'his heart was elsewhere.' I was very miserable; my husband did not seek my society, and I now feel conscious, with the adviser he had, that no wonder can be excited that he preferred being alone, or in the company of neighbouring gentlemen.

"Fitzroy has acknowledged he wished me to see my husband intoxicated, and

this he took care I should do several times ; though I confess the account he gave me of his conduct was most depraved, yet the love I bear to him made me seek for excuses, till my patience was exhausted. His agonies, and his feelings of remorse, are beyond the power of description ; and I hope sincerely that the man who has erred as he has done, may as sincerely and truly repent ; and, above all, I trust no woman will try the experiment I have, in giving my confidence to a young man, who was every way unqualified for the task of adviser. In cases like this, let a woman select some elderly female, in whose prudence she can confide—in whose unbiassed judgment she can have implicit faith ; and surely, in abiding by her counsels, no *danger* can accrue—for few men pause as Fitzroy has done ; therefore my weakness and my sorrow must plead my only excuse, and that I throw at my husband's feet."

" It strikes me," said sir William, " that Beatrice is yet in ignorance, respecting the

loss of the Halverfield estate, and I fancy she experienced no pleasing sensations, when she was driven there to find we were gone. As we are all elucidating, I shall only tell her, the lady at Pantley whom Miss Flegge and my mother passed severe judgment on, is now a resident at Halverfield with her husband, to whom she was, when at Pantley, clandestinely married. This accounts for her embarrassment and secrecy.

“ Chance revealed to my father the family-deeds of that estate, by which he regained a right to it, it having been unwittingly purchased by the father of captain English, in whose hands it now is.— Beatrice, I know you have not forgotten an old Quaker, who, when you were at our grandmother Holt’s, had some conversation with my father in the park. He endeavoured to prevent my father’s resumption of right, and told him the extremity of law is not always the judgment of equity. English and my father went to

law—I endeavoured to prevent it, foreseeing the cause would ruin English, and blast my father's character; but in vain. The estate became ours, and captain English, with his young wife, were left totally destitute, except what his pay afforded.

“ I once sent a letter to Mrs. English, enclosing a note of value, through the Quaker's daughter, who was her friend, and knew her place of residence. I twice visited her at Pantley, and gave her two rings, for I had just spent all my money on a charger. I escaped from the ball-room, when my father was high sheriff, to see her for the last time before she went to London. See how I unravel mysteries.

“ What I felt the day I took possession of the estate, I can never describe; and for a thousand guineas I would not go through the same again; and I secretly resolved, that should I ever have it in my power, I would give it back to English again. I have done this, and retrieved my own character; and now I hope you cease to wonder I was silent on points

where my honour was concerned. My dear mother, I know, had her suspicions, when she could not get me to Bath ; but the Englishes were there, and I could not bear to meet them ; and I fancy she did sometimes suspect me, when she saw letters in a female hand ; but, be assured, Susan, you were my first love, and I hope I shall ever continue to have the same affection for you I possess at this moment."

Supper, not very sentimentally, stopped this speech, and broke up the happy circle. Sir William gallantly led his lady to the top of the table, and then asked the dowager and Beatrice, if they were likely to dispute, adding, at the same time—" You see I can keep a secret ; for I knew my wife was in the house, though I did not hear the chaise come, and I kept my countenance too ; now I hope we shall be happy ; so let us begin supper."

CHAPTER XVI.
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"That human resolves are weak, every day proves; and that human judgment is fallible, is nearly as common a truth, and needs not the chilling scrutiny of metaphysics to elucidate."

IF we have hastened over some parts of our narrative, we felt that as we had wound up some parts in mystery, when once we began to unravel, it was like the untwisting of a wheel-machine—rapid and swift; and we are also aware that there is a peculiar crisis in a book, as in life, which requires to be taken at the instant, or its happiness is lost.

The heroine of our tale, last though not least, must, for a short time, tread the stage ere the curtain falls, for we owe her some acknowledgment, and will not by any means neglect her in our memoir; it were ungrateful for us so to do—therefore,

as Foscoletti says in the dagger-scene—  
“BRAVO! TO THE POINT!”

A year had elapsed since “peace had been restored” to the mansion at Hethering. Beatrice was the same kind, attentive daughter she had ever been—and well was it for her she was so, as a perseverance in good conduct and filial love, endeared her more and more to the parents who felt she was a treasure; it tended even to subdue the regret, which one time had hovered in her mother’s mind relative to her faith. She began to think she could not part with her; so necessary was she to her happiness—so obliging did she make herself—blind to the faults of others, whilst she could readily scan her own—framing excuses for the faulty, and looking with an eye of lenity on their errors.

But her religion.—“It is not possible I can ever marry a Catholic,” said Mr. Faulkner, who was still single, and report said for her sake—“I must forget her, for I clearly perceive she will never change; and yet it seems to me she shuns to con-

verse on her faith ; this looks like weakness, and doubt in its strength ;" and he resolved, when next he saw her, he would touch on that sacred subject ; but an incident occurred, which prevented that resolve being put into practice.

As the families lived within a short distance of each other, it was by no means surprising that the occurrences of each should be known and canvassed. Mr. Faulkner did not ride out, but he was obliged to pass Brundale Hall ; and Mrs. Wycherly could not walk, but she must stop to admire some of his taste displayed in his grounds, always preferring the paths which led through his domain to any other ; and his housekeeper, a woman of great curiosity, never failed to say when these circumstances took place ; and as she was one day cleaning some curious jars as he chanced to pass, he stopped to look at one, which had the armorial bearing of the family burned on it, and, for once in her life, ventured to tell him the news. He seemed at first unconscious she was speaking,

and was considering within himself whether it would not be uniform to place the jars in his drawing-room, in preference to the dining-room, when an indistinct mention of Beatrice—"Miss Wycherly's *marriage*"—aroused him.

"WHO?" said he, yet striving to control his surprise and dismay.

"Miss Wycherly, sir, is to be married to Mr. Archer, a young clergyman, sir."

"Oh!" and he made shift to say "that is all, is it?" and walked off, forgetful of the jars—forgetful of every thing respecting armorial bearings, mottoes, and uniform, altogether.

His horse was at the door for his morning ride; but he gave orders it might be taken back to the stable again, preferring a walk, and, strange to say, took the path leading to Brundale without any delay, at the same time revolving in his mind what he had heard, and judging of its merit to truth by the consistency its aspect wore—Mr. Archer, a clergyman, a young man remarkable for the strictness

of his opinions and habits, going to unite himself to a woman who professed a different faith. He knew him, having met him more than once at the Wycherlys; and during his first engagement with Beatrice, he had had an opportunity of personal friendship with him. No other objection could possibly be raised to the union, but the very ostensible one—of difference of religion.

He was agitated with thought, when a step coming quickly behind him, made him raise his head, turn, and discover the being of whom he was thinking close at his heels, with a pleased countenance, and a manner more than usually familiar and gay, and in *her* countenance and delighted features, he foresaw a confirmation of his worst fears. He prevailed on himself to treat her with the same degree of pleasure she greeted him with, and to add, in a tone a little too hurried to be quite calm—“Mr. Archer is going to be married—so I hear: may I believe the report? I look upon *you* at least to know.”

"Oh yes!" said the delighted girl, "he is—I confirm it, and with the sincerest pleasure."

"So I see," exclaimed Mr. Faulkner, gravely; "he is truly deserving an amiable wife, and I wish him every happiness. I may attribute to that event some of the joy so visible in your features?"

Beatrice's blushes answered for her.

"But how is it that *he* has prevailed on a point, where so many and so much has failed?" inquired Mr. Faulkner.

"Love," exclaimed Beatrice, covered with blushes, "I never yet heard was deficient in power; undoubtedly—nay I am certain, it was *his* regard, his affection, which has subdued, and done away all unreasonable demur—there is nothing to prevent——But I may not dilate on this, as I am in haste to see a poor creature here just by. Good bye!"

"Farewell!" said Mr. Faulkner, stopping and looking after her; and the next evening found him in *London*.

A man in love (be he ever so sensible)

is equally subject to inconsistency and rashness, as he is to the force of that love; for had Mr. Faulkner been calm and considerate, he would never have rushed to town, and thereby given all Brundale leave to animadvert on his abrupt departure, having accepted no less than four invitations for the ensuing week. Mrs. Wycherly thought he was gone on business, and readily excused him; Mrs. G—— gave him credit for being mad; and Mrs. B—— generously thought him a young man, whose mind was too polite to assimilate to any thing like neglect, and therefore awaited his coming back with true christian-like patience to explain all.

It was indeed Mr. Archer, who, by the pure and simple method of conviction, had won Beatrice to his own faith. Chance had thrown them together at Hethering during the year gone by; and, unaided by books of controversy—unaided by any thing but his own well-informed and religious-instructed mind, he had prevailed on her to listen to him, and finally adopt the



Protestant faith. He convinced her that her zeal had blinded her—her enthusiasm misled her—and even brought her to acknowledge it was really so, and that there were times when she felt even unhappy in the mystical faith which she had abandoned. She had full time to reflect on his words, and with joy embraced the religion, which till then had never been but partially revealed to her; and with this joy, there was not mingled one earthly thought—one sentiment, which she would not freely have submitted to human penetration. The delight her parents experienced in the change was great; but that of Mr. Archer was more powerful and ardent; and Beatrice herself felt happier than she had ever been in her life.

CHAPTER XVII.  
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MR. Faulkner had reached town the very evening his sister, Mrs. Harvey, had thought proper to give a ball; and what she considered still more fortunate, mademoiselle Nantz (whom he had once been heard to say he “liked NEXT to Beatrice”) was to be there. He anticipated something grand; for, before he was aware, he found himself in an illuminated hall—servants hurrying in all directions—Mrs. Harvey dressing, and scarcely able, amid the duties of the toilet, to come down to speak to him; however, whilst he was refreshing himself, in high spirits, in superb dress, she hastened in, asking him what in the name of fortune could bring him to town in such haste? Without waiting for a reply, her thoughts reverting to her ball, she said—“Mademoiselle Nantz is here

—mademoiselle Nantz, whom you thought so handsome—played so well, you know.”

“Ah, I remember,” he replied, carelessly.

“Well,” continued Mrs. Harvey, “and how are the Barkers, and the Carters? and, above all, your old love—your obstinate love—Beatrice?”

“She is well, and going to be married.”

Mrs. Harvey immediately conjectured from her brother's countenance, THAT drove him to town, and was wise enough, in pity to his feelings, to drop the subject, only telling him she was glad he was come, and hoped he would stay some time; above all, cautioned him against mademoiselle Nantz, for it is the very best way in the world (so obstinate is love) to warn a person against it, when you wish them to fall into it.

Whoever (but our hero) on such a gala night, could hear a fine band in full swell, and not wish to be in the quadrille? He, to please his sister, dressed himself, and was hastening to join the “gay throng,” when, as she was altering her feathers in

one of the anterooms, she saw him passing by.

"Come here," said she, "I want your opinion on my dress—is it not very elegant? Harvey reviles it; and has been laughing at me, calling me Columbine; but these plaids are all the rage—and these feathers too are truly Highland. I know mademoiselle Nantz will be in full costume; don't think to see her so handsome as she once was. But my dress—what do you think of it?"

"Only that it is too gay," said Mr. Faulkner, observing as he spoke that his sister was unusually in spirits, and peculiarly so, considering the long illness she had had.

"Well, and I bear the wear and tear of fashion well. My dear friend, mademoiselle Nantz (who nursed me so long), tells me a country life is best; she loves the country, and I tell her she must marry and live there. But here I am keeping you, when you might just as well be dancing."

Opening the saloon door, Mr. Faulkner soon found himself amongst a large and brilliant party, who were busied in forming quadrilles. Not having a violent passion for dancing, he sat down beside a group of ladies, and entered into conversation with them on the subject of Highland plumes and tartan silks, which he observed were the reigning fashion of the night.

Mr. Faulkner, since he had for a certainty lost Beatrice, wisely endeavoured to cheer his mind by harmless gaiety; he was too fatigued to enjoy a quadrille, yet he was far from being averse to conversation.

“Who, but my brother,” said Mrs. Harvey, “would be sitting still, when that sweet quadrille is dancing?—Mademoiselle Nantz, *do* go and speak to him—you have not seen him these two years.”

Hearing this request, a beautiful girl, plainly dressed in white satin, rose, and with something of bashful timidity proceeded to the group where he was sit-

ting, and presented him with a myrtle sprig Mrs. Harvey had commissioned her to give him.

“Mademoiselle Nantz, I am sure,” said Mr. Faulkner, with an expression of surprise and amazement at the extreme loveliness of her person, and the great improvement two years had made in her appearance. She bowed, smiled, and was going to return to Mrs. Harvey, when he arose, and entered into conversation with her on the events which had passed since they last met, entreated her to favour him with her hand for the next dance, exclaiming at the same time—“I did not think any thing could have tempted me to dance; indeed I had made a resolution not to do so—so much for man’s resolutions!”

Mademoiselle Nantz smiled again, and felt what she looked—gratified and pleased. Mr. Faulkner saw she was so, and *he* did not feel angry that her eyes were lighted up with intelligent delight. The quadrilles fixed on were those of *Les Lanciers*. From her earliest youth, ma-

demoiselle Nantz had cultivated her taste for dancing; and it chanced she particularly excelled in those proposed. She had all that fairy-like motion, and elasticity of figure, which we are constrained to admire; yet with it was joined none of that operative exhibition which is disgusting and unfeminine. Mr. Faulkner, under the guidance of so fair a partner, found himself insensibly mingle in the quadrilles with spirit, and regretted when they were over, and mademoiselle Nantz claimed by another partner. As she was going up the room, he observed she had none of that pride so often attendant on heiresses, or people who unwisely imagine fortune is to carry the day against every other consideration; she was gentle and modest, without foolish or awkward bashfulness—cheerful without levity; she had all the elegance of a fashionable woman, but none of fashion's affectation. She had, besides all this, an extreme fine figure, and all that intelligence beauty bestows, set off by plain and ju-

dicious arrangement of dress—a dress more than usually conspicuously neat, from the variegated costume of the Highland plaid, which seemed to prevail amongst the ladies as well as the gentlemen.

“There,” said Mrs. Harvey, who could not contain her exultation, “did I not tell you she was pretty? I see you are quite astonished at the improvement time has made.”

“You did not tell me she was *beautiful*!” he answered, divining her schemes and thoughts; and an involuntary smile passed over his face, which was far from being lost on his sister—“all I request is, don’t manœuvre for me; let me choose for myself, for I think you ~~are~~ making a dead set.”

“No, no, no,” answered Mrs. Harvey—“that’s not like me. I know mademoiselle Nantz is very beautiful, and I wished her to *please* you; I want you to like my friends, and forget old loves—but I don’t wish to engage in the responsibility of choosing a wife for a man like yourself.”

"Well said, and better understood," said he—"I *do* like mademoiselle—I *do* think her very pretty; I may say more—beautiful!—I *do* admire her; but leave me to myself, and leave me to manage; my affections recede from force, as I did, when I was little, from medicine which was poured down my throat."

Mrs. Harvey took the hint, and, protesting *she* meant nothing at all like manoeuvring, and always wished him to choose for himself, left him to watch her friend's beauty and dancing. He was thus employed when a lady, whose face he remembered, fanged hold of his arm, and asked him if he had entirely forgotten her? Pausing a moment in some little embarrassment, he answered he could not recollect her name, but her features he had not forgotten.

"Bless me!—Mrs. Evans.—Mrs. Evans, whom you met a year since at Mr. Wycherly's. Pray how is Beatrice?"

"Ah, how is that intelligent girl?" said

mademoiselle Nantz, who at that moment came up—"I hear she is going to be married."

"Indeed!" advanced Mrs. Evans, taking up the conversation—"I wish her very happy!—who is it—do tell me all about it—or perhaps Mr. Faulkner, who lives on the spot, will, for *he* must know?"

Mr. Faulkner thought proper, just at that moment, to examine a bouquet of flowers, and could not possibly hear. Mademoiselle Nantz having gone through all she knew respecting the conversion of Beatrice and her engagement, turned to Mr. Faulkner, saying—"I think Miss Wycherly a very superior girl; she struck me as having a truly original mind; I saw her at your house."

"She is——" and he hesitated a moment, fearful of betraying himself, adding, "a very agreeable girl."

But his companion saw, in the sudden change in his countenance, all the feelings he wished to suppress. She only blushed,—not with mortification, not with wound-

ed pride or envy—but to think how much she had been paining the individual who was by her ; and under the strong impulse of the moment, she exclaimed—“ I *beg* your pardon, Mr. Faulkner—I *beg* your pardon !” The lowness of her voice, and the crimson of her cheek, told plainly to what she alluded ; and he, recognising the cause of her confusion, replied—“ Do not mention it ; it was so perfectly unintentional, it could not offend me.” And we do not scruple to say he, at that moment, thought how superior was her conduct to that which would have felt glory in his pain, and smiled at the pangs of disappointed love. The blush which overspread her countenance was modest and becoming ; and Mr. Faulkner thought so, and could not help respecting those feelings which gave it birth.

“ I think,” said Mrs. Evans, drawing near, “ you, Mr. Faulkner, knew Beatrice Wycherly well ; do tell me the name of that tale she wrote—is she as plain as ever ?”

“ *I* can give you the title,” said mademoiselle Nantz, with some quickness of

speech and manner, and in a low tone of voice—"indeed I will send you the work. As to being plain, there is too much expression in her face, for her ever to be termed plain.—I wish you would stand from the air of those doors; let us go lower down the room." And linking her arm in the ready-offered one of Mrs. Evans, they soon were several paces from Faulkner.

Though mademoiselle Nantz had spoken in a low voice, he had listened for every word—he treasured "every word" also; and he admired the kindness which prompted her to lead Mrs. Evans away from him. As mademoiselle was going into the supper-room, he took care to express his sense of her generosity, in warm and animated terms, adding—"I am not forgetful of your manœuvring Mrs. Evans from me; I hope you will do me the justice to think me very grateful."

Lady Anne Wrench, who heard this emphasis, and in fact the whole of the speech, said, laughing—

"Gratitude will lead to love;
So says Chloe to her heart."

Mr. Faulkner looked at mademoiselle Nantz with a smile; but she only blushed in reply.

Mademoiselle Nantz, in consequence of being on a visit at Mrs. Harvey's, was thrown immediately into the society of Mr. Faulkner, to whom it may be with truth averred she felt no distaste. He had just the solidity of judgment she prized, the entertaining manners she admired, and, above all, appeared to be virtuous and principled in his conduct and thoughts, and was by no means an every-day commonplace character. Mademoiselle Nantz drew back from Mrs. Harvey's pushes forward, for she was bent on having her for a sister-in-law, and scrupled not to give her friend every opportunity of full play on Mr. Faulkner's heart. Did she play, and Mr. Faulkner would move to the instrument to listen, Mrs. Harvey, under some specious pretence, left the room; did she sing, Mrs. Harvey would remind her of the

fine compliments her voice created when she favoured a certain select party, and appeal to her brother, to know if he did not coincide in thinking her voice very delightful. Mademoiselle Nantz would sometimes be so painfully confused as to make blunders in her songs, and then blushing get up and declare Mrs. Harvey said such fine things she could not play any more; and so uncomfortable was her friend's manœuvring to her, that she one morning, between jest and earnest, ventured to express how embarrassed she felt when it was going forward.

“Do, my dear Mrs. Harvey,” she said, “have compassion on me; you really will make me commit myself in some unfortunate way, if you will try to *make* your brother *make* love to me; I am conscious he sees it all—and it is to me so dissonant to delicacy. Besides, you make a fool of yourself; and these things are so soon seen through—and *you* know how you dislike to be called a manœuvrer; and you married yourself without any one giving you

their aid—and let me go off the lists of celibacy by my own efforts; a third should not interfere, indeed; and I want no helping hand: if I were ugly, my fortune would attract some; but as I am not, I think I stand a good chance. Mind, I reckon myself only passable.”

Now there was no vanity in this speech, for mademoiselle Nantz was above it; and she trusted the little she had said would, in future, prevent any more manœuvring for *her*.

“You are a little ungrateful,” said Mrs. Harvey in reply.—“Here I give you every opportunity of assailing my adamant brother—here I quit the room when I think he is about to say soft things—and if I do place you together at table now and then, where is the harm, I pray you?—but I have done!”

“You will not be angry, I am sure,” said mademoiselle, raising her eyes, “when I say my delicacy is wounded, and my pride revolts at being thrown into

the way of a man whom, I do really confess, is one against which the heart of woman *should* guard itself. Only think, my dear friend, if, constantly exposed to his conversation, constantly in his society, and really thrown into it, I SHOULD love him, and he not return that regard, what would be your sufferings—what would be my own!”

“Why, it would be very disagreeable,” said Mrs. Harvey.

“And how can I tell,” advanced mademoiselle Nantz, with a sudden increase of colour, “that my sense of female delicacy might not fail, when I was told (as you have told me), ‘give him only a *little* encouragement, and he MUST love you?’ I must not seek *him*—he must seek *me*. My pride might, in this case, afford me no chance of escaping from love; for I have been told it always deserts you in the hour of need. You, my dear madam, expose me to temptation; and indeed you must not do so, or I shall tremble for myself.”

Mrs. Harvey looked on the ingenuous beautiful girl a moment, in silent admiration, and then said—"Well, simple as I may have been, and I acknowledge I have, the person you wish to convince of your peril stands near you—look there!"

Mademoiselle raised her eyes, and beheld Mr. Faulkner, with his countenance illumined by a sudden spasm of heartfelt joy, at the opposite door, with a book in his hand.

"I have heard all," he said—"but perfectly unintentionally.—And now, dear sister, since you have so often put that young lady in peril, I trust you will leave the room, or I may subject you to the same."

He advanced as he spoke, taking mademoiselle's hand, and saw the door close on his sister with some satisfaction. He told mademoiselle Nantz he was her sincere friend—(is not friendship with the young and beautiful dangerous?)—that he felt for her when Mrs. Harvey manœuvred—and he confessed he that day felt every sentiment of esteem for her increase, for

she had proved herself what he always thought her—a female of a delicate mind; and it gave him the sincerest pleasure to find his ideas realized.

How timid and beautiful mademoiselle looked, we can't pretend to say. She was too much embarrassed to talk at all coherent; and Mr. Faulkner, after a short term of conversation, left her to herself, and resumed his studies in the library. They were both confidants.

Mrs. Harvey felt tolerably sure something had passed consonant to her wishes, between her brother and mademoiselle Nantz. They no longer felt themselves embarrassed when they were left alone; but she once caught them smiling, as she was leaving the room under some ideal pretence or other; and Mr. Faulkner did not seem in such a violent hurry to leave, as he at first had said his stay could not be protracted to a great length. Mademoiselle Nantz too, with singular kindness, offered her services in finishing a piece of painting for a skreen, which would at least

detain her a fortnight. Mr. Faulkner too assisted her in sorting the colours, and mixed them for her on the palette; read whilst she worked—listened whilst she played and sung—and DID say “she was an amiable, intelligent, well-informed girl, and that he was pleased to be in her society.”

“Good folks,” said the colonel one evening, as Mr. Faulkner was looking over a book of valuable prints, and mademoiselle Nantz was listening to his remarks, “it strikes me you will have no objection to be alone?”

“None,” said Mr. Faulkner—“none at all.”

“None,” said mademoiselle Nantz, laughing.

And the colonel rising up, looked significantly at them both, shook his head, and left the room; protesting he had some affairs to transact, which would give them the liberty of PLEASING conversation for an hour at least.

Mrs. Harvey, who, to do her justice,

loved mademoiselle Nantz with great tenderness, and pleased that her brother was really in love (for such she deemed him to be), could no longer restrain her impatience to question her friend on the affair itself.—“That is a beautiful ring you have on your finger,” said she, one evening, beating about the bush—“a sapphire, is it not? Why, you need not blush—my question is only a simple one, is it?”

Now, as it happened, mademoiselle did *not* blush, but took off the ring, and composedly said—“Yes, the ring is handsome, but the giver still more so;” and *then* a blush did come—a fine full blush.

“Well, I never could see he *was* handsome,” advanced Mrs. Harvey again; “and I sincerely think you are the most ungrateful of girls, to be so close, after all my pains; and they have been productive of *some* good, and that you shall admit; and you ought to tell me all.”

“I do not think they have been of any use,” said mademoiselle, with a little hesitation; “nevertheless, I thank you for the

kind motive which prompted you to do as you *have* done."

"And there is my brother, just the same—I can get nothing out of him, only that he is very happy, and has got some little things to settle at the Lodge soon. Pray tell me, are you engaged?"

"I am," said mademoiselle, in a faint voice.

"To him—to John—to my brother?" said Mrs. Harvey, with that delightful feeling human nature experiences when any of its plans answer, or its hopes are realized.

Mademoiselle could not answer; for Mr. Faulkner at the moment entered, and throwing a letter, or rather note, on the table, asked his sister to read it, and at the same time added—"I think mademoiselle Nantz leaves you to-morrow—so do I." A very peculiar look passed between them, which was not lost on Mrs. Harvey. "I may as well tell you at once—I am going to be married next week."

"And are you going to be married

too?" said Mrs. Harvey, turning to mademoiselle Nantz, with a laughing look.

"Yes."

"And next week?"

"Why to be sure."

"Well, good folks, you have behaved very ill; nevertheless, you have my forgiveness; only there was no occasion to be so close, because at the last I must know. And now I will be revenged; for Mrs. Drummond is coming this evening, for a pool of quadrille, and I shall tell her. And pray where may you be going to be married?—in what may you be going to be dressed? Perhaps these are secrets also. Oh, you are both confounded!" Here she laughed.

A footman's rap made Mrs. Harvey compose herself; and Mr. Faulkner, fearful of being a witness to the intended explosion of news, gathered up his note, and fled the room.

"Now, Mrs. Drummond," said Mrs. Harvey, "as I know you are fond of news, and I have been treated very ill by two

nameless beings, and I also know that you *can* keep a secret (which, by the by, was most egregiously false), I must tell you we are going to have a wedding in our family—my brother: it takes place, if the lady will give her consent, next week.” Here she gave mademoiselle Nantz an expressive look, which Mrs. Drummond immediately understood.

Mrs. Drummond played two pools, and then went to lady Killegrew’s, where she soon spread the intelligence. Lady Killegrew told lady Felix—lady Felix the honourable Mrs. A——, till all the world (the inhabitants of the west end of the town) knew that Mr. Faulkner was going to be married to mademoiselle Nantz.

“At least,” said Mrs. Harvey, “you will bring your bride to town when you are married, John?”

“Do you think she will wish to come?” advanced he, smilingly, turning to mademoiselle Nantz.

“Pshaw! now do not be silly,” said Mrs. Harvey; “drop all ambiguity, and confess

your engagement at once. The colonel vows he will not be present at your marriage, unless he previously sees the bride, and knows for a CERTAINTY who it is."

"She will be in town next week, won't she?" said Mr. Faulkner, again appealing to mademoiselle Nantz, and smiling at the same time.

"I dare say, if you wish it," replied that amiable woman, "she will."

"Well, but your dress—what is your dress?" said Mrs. Harvey; "for it begins to be time to think of that; and your mother's consent, is that gained?"

"Oh yes," said both Mr. Faulkner and mademoiselle Nantz, in the same breath.

"Well, we will be married here, if you will let us," said Mr. Faulkner, steadily.

"Oh, to be sure!—Oh yes, delightful! then mademoiselle Nantz need not go home; and we can order the dresses; and an express might be sent to your mother, my love, and also to my aunt. And when is the day?—that I must know: and shall we not drive to the milliner's this morning,

and order your clothes? Oh, my dear intended sister-in-law!"

"My wedding-day will be on Thursday next, without fail," said Mr. Faulkner.

"Very well. And there shall be a ball; and the bride must lead it off with my husband."

"But I must go home to-morrow," said mademoiselle Nantz, calmly. "I can return on the Monday: Mr. Faulkner comes on the Monday, and passes our house on his way thither."

"And will bring you?" rejoined Mrs. Harvey, hurriedly. "Well, this is delightful! I declare it has made me quite a new creature, and I shall dream of nothing but silver favours, and wedding presents."

"As I also leave you to-morrow," said Mr. Faulkner, "and shall not return till Monday, give my regards to the colonel, and tell him, as I shall not see him till then, that he must take possession of Phoebe, my black mare, I having lost my bet. So good night!"

“ Good night !” said Mrs. Harvey, dancing out of the room, to give the lovers a few minutes private conversation before *they* parted.

The Monday came, and Mrs. Harvey thought every moment an age, till her brother and his bride elect should come: she watched every equipage which passed, and at last saw that of her brother, and mademoiselle Nantz’s, drive quickly up to the door. Down went the step—out came the ladies—mademoiselle and her bridemaide elect—her mother—Mr. Faulkner; and without waiting to see the contents of the other carriage, she flew to the drawing-room door, her heart beating with joy, and her countenance flushed with emotion.—“ So you *are* come! I have been looking for you,” she exclaimed, as Mr. Faulkner made his appearance, accompanied by the colonel, who was all smiles and pleasure.

“ Yes—here we are; and we have brought some unexpected visitors with us—old friends of yours: I wished them to

be at my marriage, and therefore I know you will make them welcome."

"Oh yes!" and in the joy of her heart, Mrs. Harvey exclaimed—"Oh yes! How happy you all look! Come, where is the dear bride elect?—why have you left her?"

"I am going to fetch her," said Mr. Faulkner, smiling.—"My dear colonel, lead your wife to the drawing-room, will you? and I will soon follow."

The colonel led off Mrs. Harvey, saying, at the same time, he hoped she would compose herself. He had scarcely time to give her that piece of necessary advice, before the door opened, and in came Faulkner, his whole manner bespeaking joy—pure, delighted, heartfelt joy.—"This is my wife—my intended wife," he exclaimed; and drawing forward a young lady, who held back, as if abashed, Mrs. Harvey beheld BEATRICE WYCHERLY!

Before Mrs. Harvey had the power of uttering a syllable, Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly came in, with mademoiselle Nantz, and her mother, accompanied by a Mr. Far-

quhar, whom she immediately recognised as being a favoured lover of mademoiselle's, but rejected by her mother, in consequence of his want of fortune.—“What is all this?” said Mrs. Harvey, in a voice of agitation, yet far from being one of displeasure. “How you have deceived me! but I am glad at last to see you, John, have the woman of your heart, and one whom I am sure will make you happy.” She then extended her hand to Beatrice, and kissed her affectionately, and welcomed all assembled with undisguised friendship and hospitality.

The colonel had been in the secret, as well as mademoiselle Nantz and her mother; but as Mrs. Harvey wished for an explanation, one was entered into immediately by the happy Mr. Faulkner. He proceeded to relate, that on the day he had overheard mademoiselle Nantz express her *fears* of being in his society, he was determined to tell her, plainly, no other woman than Beatrice Wycherly could, or would, even have any claim on his affections. He

hoped mademoiselle would be his friend, more particularly so, when he advanced, that young Farquhar was indebted to him for a living; and that nothing should be wanted on his part to bring about a marriage, which he was convinced would render both mademoiselle Nantz and Mr. Farquhar happy. They were friends, and confidants. Mr. Faulkner was not at all sorry to hear, through mademoiselle Nantz, who corresponded with Beatrice, that she was *not* going to be married to Mr. Archer; and that owing to some allusions to his marriage with another lady, he had been mistaken as to *her* being the chosen one when they had last met.

He lost no time in writing to Mr. Wycherly, to claim Beatrice for his bride; and he lost no time in penning an epistle to her also, in which he promised to do all in his power to contribute to her happiness; if she would consent to have him—well assured she possessed the essential requisites to render him permanently happy, &c. &c.

Mademoiselle Nantz was going to be

married to Mr. Farquhar the ensuing week; for her mother no longer withheld her consent, assured as she was of the mutual affection which existed between them. He that morning arrived from Penhurst, just in time to enter into the little party, and proceed to town.

That Mrs. Harvey was a little disappointed, we will not scruple to say; she had manoeuvred—finessed—planned—and hoped, all to no purpose. But when she reflected on the long and rooted affection which her brother possessed for Beatrice, and that he was going to be made happy, she could not resist the natural feelings of regard for him, and entered into the spirit of *his* joy.

Mr. and Mrs. Wycherly had not been aware of the deception which had been practised on poor Mrs. Harvey, or they might not so readily have accompanied Mr. Faulkner, who went to Brundale for Beatrice, to her house. But the colonel had written in his own name, and that of his lady's, pressing them to make their

house their home, during the stay they made in town, and subjoined a wish, that the marriage might be solemnized there.

No one had any possible objection; and every thing being explained, Mr. Faulkner, turning to his sister, said—"My dear Caroline, this day has convinced me more than ever of the goodness of your heart: in your manœuvres, I did not see much to condemn, for my welfare was nearest your heart; but, believe me, I think I am revenged. I have lost my bet to the colonel; for he was positive I should be married within the year, and I was equally positive I should not; for Beatrice I then apprehended was engaged. But I have obtained the woman of my heart, and I may truly be said, encompassed as I am with blessings, to be in a fair road of happiness."

THE END.

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